

USA firm on defence shield

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ALICE LAGNADO & GILES WHITTELL
THE TIMES, LONDON

'MOSCOW OPPOSITION IMMATERIAL'

MOSCOW, July 27. - President George W Bush's national security adviser yesterday told President Vladimir Putin that the US leader is determined to start building an anti-missile shield during his first term, with or without Russian approval.

After talks with the Russian leader in the Kremlin yesterday, Ms Condoleezza Rice said Washington would go ahead with tests banned by the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty despite strong Russian opposition.

"President Bush made it clear that he believes there is a threat, a new threat, and we will need to move, to go beyond ABM so that we can have a serious testing and evaluation programme that gets us a solution to the threat," Ms Rice said after her talks. "He has not set

a specific deadline, but it should be obvious to all concerned that the President believes that this is something that will happen relatively soon," she said. "The testing programme will proceed."

Ms Rice flew to Moscow this week for talks that the White House hopes will launch an "entirely different" Russian-American relationship and bury for good the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty. Mr Georgi Mamedov, Russia's top arms negotiator, said yesterday that Moscow still stands behind ABM. "I would recall here the words of Mr Putin immediately after his return from Genoa, that Russia still sees the ABM treaty as one of the most important elements in strategic stability," he said.

Russia has been sending out

clear signals, at considerable political risk to Mr Putin, that it is ready to compromise with Washington by modifying the ABM treaty. "If Russian experts were to decide such changes will not harm the national security of Russia, then I will report that to the President," said Mr Sergei Ivanov, defence minister, on Wednesday.

But that will not be enough, as Ms Rice made clear: ABM must be scrapped by mutual agreement or the US will simply walk away from it. The only concession Washington is prepared to offer Moscow is linking drastic cuts in both countries' missile stockpiles to an agreement on a missile shield. Mr Putin has hinted that any changes to ABM should be enshrined in a new treaty, but Ms

Rice has rejected that idea as taking too long. He has also threatened to launch a new arms race if the treaty is violated. Mr Ivanov has since admitted such a race would be, for Russia, economic 'suicide'.

Washington: Leading Senate Democrats have changed their minds about President Bush's proposal to scrap the 1972 ABM Treaty and declared their support for him, provided the US reaches an agreement with Russia, Michael Evans writes.

Encouraged by the agreement between Mr Bush and Mr Putin in Genoa to discuss the issue of missile defence and cuts in strategic nuclear weapons, Senator Joseph Biden, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said: "I was positively impressed by what I believe to be the President's understanding to keep Russia close."

THE STATES

Bush seeks trade powers ahead of WTO meeting

S Rajagopalan
Washington, July 28

AHEAD OF the World Trade Organisation's crucial meeting in Qatar in November, President Bush has sought broad trade negotiating powers from the US Congress.

The move is in line with the thinking that without the President enjoying such authority, the US would not be taken seriously at the WTO meet that proposes to launch a new round of global trade talks. The underlying logic is that in the present scheme of things, the US Congress can change any agreement reached by the administration.

Till 1994, the US President enjoyed the "trade promotion authority". That year, the legislative provision lapsed and attempts by Bush's predecessor, Bill Clinton, to regain the powers failed. Once the President gets the trade authority, the Congress cannot amend any trade agreements. It, however, will have the freedom to approve or disapprove the whole agreement.

"I'm one of the few presidents never to have had that authority. I'm asking Congress to give it to me for the good of the American people, for the good of the agricultural sector, so that I can use my efforts to knock down the trade barriers, the protectionist tendencies around the world that prevent our products from getting into markets," Bush told an organisation of young farmers on Friday.

Bush also indicated a break from the past in that agriculture would no longer be treated as a secondary issue. As far as his administration is concerned, agriculture is going to be the "cornerstone" of the US's international trade negotiations.

There is no clarity as of now on whether Bush will succeed in getting the authority. Apart from strong reservations among the Democrats, organised labour is also opposing the measure as it fears loss of jobs. Labour unions have begun putting out TV ads, urging the Congress to deny trade powers to the President. As part of its persuasive case for presidential powers, the White House says the authority will aid the US economy, currently caught up in a severe slowdown. This could be done by lifting tariffs that presently discourage other countries from buying American goods and services.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Lonesome cowboy Powell woos Japan Minister



AP PHOTO
 US Secretary of State Colin Powell in a cowboy costume and Japan Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka in a Vietnamese woman's costume during the short skit at a dinner meeting in Hanoi on Thursday.

Hanoi

US SECRETARY of State Colin Powell returned to a song popular among GIs during his combat service in Vietnam to woo Japanese Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka with a rendition of the tragic tale of a lonesome cowboy gunned down for love.

After two days of intensive talks on weighty issues of arms control and international trade, the world's top diplomats steeled themselves for an evening of karaoke and fancy dress late Thursday at the closing dinner of the main Asia-Pacific security forum.

Tanaka, Japan's first female foreign minister, was the surprise love interest in Powell's version of "El Paso", as the former Gulf War general shed his gruff military persona to the delight of minis-

ters from China, Russia, Southeast Asia and Europe. Accompanied by a guitarist, a cowboy-suited Powell launched into "Out in the West Texas town of El Paso, I fell in love with a Vietnamese girl..." in a voice that one delegate perhaps uncharitably said left something to be desired.

Tanaka then appeared in a traditional Vietnamese conical hat to be serenaded with the words: "Blacker than night were the eyes of Makiko/Wicked and evil while casting her spell/My love was deep for this Vietnamese maiden/I was in love, but in vain I could tell."

"She looked like a good-looking Vietnamese," commented Rodolfo Severino, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) secretary general, on Friday.

The cowboy, who in the origi-

nal lyrics falls in love with a Mexican girl, turns jealous when a handsome young stranger appears in town and shares a drink with "Makiko".

"Powell" shoots him dead and flees town, but his love is too strong to keep him away and he returns to El Paso to find an avenging posse in wait. To a loud pop from a toy gun, Powell fell dying on the stage, according to delegates present at the dinner in Hanoi. The Japanese foreign minister, a former actress, rushed over and kissed him on the cheek. "Cradled by two loving arms that I'll die for/One little kiss and Makiko good bye," Powell concluded in words that brought the house down.

"He threw himself into it with gusto," said a delegate. "His singing voice is not that good. He's clearly a military man, but

he did it all with enthusiasm. Powell was in Vietnam for the first time since surviving two tours of combat duty in the 1960s. In his best-selling autobiography *My American Journey*, he reminisces that "El Paso" was a favourite ballad.

Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, dressed in a Boyar suit as worn by his country's old nobility, regaled the high-powered gathering with a rendition of a song less closely associated with his home nation, the Beatles' *Yellow Submarine*. Ivanov adapted the old karaoke standard himself, with lyrics hailing the ethnic patchwork of a multi-coloured world, and other delegations loudly joined in for the chorus, a Russian official said.

Ivanov is a veteran performer at the ASEAN Regional Forum dinners — one year he even

joined Powell's predecessor Madeleine Albright in a rousing rendition of "Don't Cry for Me, Argentina". A reluctant Alexander Downer, Australia's foreign minister, played his part by singing "Kokomo" by the Beach Boys.

"Usually ministers don't like doing them but they are part of the tradition. I feel fairly depressed about it, but I go ahead with it all the same," a smiling Downer said on the morning after the dinner as he dwelled on his sixth performance at the annual gathering.

"I think all of the performances were very good, most enjoyable. The delegations all made a big effort to entertain," he said. Some ministers read out poems or excerpts from plays; Downer added.

AFP

North Korea, Iraq main threats: US

HT Correspondent
Washington, July 29

NOT CHINA, certainly not Russia. The United States now rates North Korea and Iraq as its main military threats in the near future.

The two, along with Iran and Libya, have broadly been classified as "rogue states".

Washington may well be involved in serious friction off and on with China on issues ranging from security to human rights, but it is North Korea and Iraq which have been identified as main threats by the Pentagon.

The two indeed are reckoned to be the *raison d'être* for the US's controversial missile

defence system.

In a CNN talk show on Saturday, Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz gave a broad outline of the Pentagon's threat perceptions. "Wars might happen tomorrow in Korea and Iraq," he remarked.

Having defeated Iraq in the 1991 Gulf War, the US sees North Korea as the No. 1 threat.

"We face enormous conventional threats from North Korea," Wolfowitz said.

Iraq does constitute a potent force even now. If not for the US, it "could be in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) tomorrow". But, according to Wolfowitz, one of the US's strong points is that it knows Iraq's weaknesses. The US's own weakness was its

inability to knock out Iraq's "primitive Scud missiles", but this shortcoming has now been overcome, he said.

As for the mind-boggling costs of developing and deploying the missile defence system, Wolfowitz said no estimates could be given at this point as the system is in a development phase.

But he dismissed the "figments of people's imagination" the projection in some quarters that the costs could exceed \$ 100 billion.

For 2002, the White House is seeking Congressional approval for an additional Pentagon expenditure of \$ 18.4 billion. The Pentagon itself had sought an additional \$ 30 billion.

COLIN POWELL WRAPS UP

'PRODUCTIVE' CHINA VISIT

Beijing, July 29

US SECRETARY of State Colin Powell today concluded a "productive" visit to Beijing.

Powell, the senior-most US official to visit China under the new Republican administration, said he had "productive" meetings with the Chinese leadership, including with President Jiang Zemin, who has invited President George W Bush to China in October.

PTI

U.S. launches diplomatic offensive to revive Indo-Pak dialogue

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WASHINGTON: The U.S. is launching a diplomatic offensive to revive high-level India-Pakistan talks, even as it publicly emphasises that the country does not wish to jump in and resuscitate the failed dialogue, administration officials have indicated.

The offensive was kicked off this week with the visit to New Delhi of assistant secretary of state for South Asian affairs Christina Rocca and it was no secret that "encouraging" India and Pakistan to keep talking permeated much of her discussions with senior India officials. The new U.S. ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, is already in India and the envoy to Pakistan, Wendy Chamberlin, is expected to be in place before the month is out. Their first order of business was to keep hammering away at how much the U.S. would like New Delhi and Islamabad to not let this opportunity —initiated by Prime Minister Vajpayee's invitation to Gen Pervez Musharraf that culminated in the failed Agra summit—be wasted.

Senior administration officials acknowledged that in the near term the U.S. would indeed play a proactive behind-the-scenes role in strongly encouraging

Mr Vajpayee, who has accepted Gen. Musharraf's invitation, to visit Pakistan. The officials said in a similar vein Washington would also continue to encourage external affairs minister Jaswant Singh, who has also been invited by his Pakistani counterpart, Abdul Sattar, to do the same. On July 16, immediately after the failed summit, the U.S. put a positive spin, clinging on to Mr Vajpayee's acceptance of the Musharraf invitation to visit Pakistan as an indication that the summit was not a total disaster. State department spokesman Richard Boucher said, "We strongly support sustained engagement at the senior level between India and Pakistan as the best way to address long-standing bilateral disputes and make real progress toward a reduction of tension and resolution of their differences through peaceful means."

Then, even before the regular afternoon briefing the next day at the state department, Mr Boucher's office had yet another statement ready, saying, "The serious and constructive atmosphere of the talks indicates that both sides are committed to resolving their differences." (IANS)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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US moves to check terror import

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, Oct. 30. — Mr George W Bush has set up a task force to bar entry of terrorists into the USA, arrest those already there and tighten visa policies.

"We've set up a Foreign Terrorist Tracking Task Force to make sure that the land of the free is as safe as possible," the President said yesterday at the first meeting of Homeland Security Council. The forum was set up after the 11 September terror attacks.

"We welcome legal immigrants and we welcome people coming to America. We welcome the process that encourages people to come to our country to visit, to study, and to work. What we don't welcome are people who come to hurt the Americans..." Mr Bush told journalists.

He has ordered officials to "tighten up" visa policies and ensure that someone in the country on a student visa "actually goes to school."

The White House issued a statement saying the student visa policy will be reviewed "to prohibit the education and training of foreign nationals who would use their training to harm the USA and its allies."

War: In Afghanistan, US planes targeted suspected underground command centres of Osama bin Laden and the Taliban stronghold of Kandahar today amid reports that Northern Alliance forces have mobilised hundreds of elite fighters near the frontline, north of Kabul. The capital, Mazar-i-Sharif and Jalalabad were pounded last night. The US defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, said today

WORRY FOR INDIA

NEW DELHI, Oct. 30. — The defence minister hopes that Pakistan will keep its nuclear weapons safely. "We may differ in politics. But I must give Pakistan credit that they're responsible people and won't allow people to walk away with nuclear weapons," Mr George Fernandes said today.

India has been worried about the safety of Pakistan's nuclear weapons and discussed the issue with Britain and the USA. Some fear the weapons may fall into the wrong hands. The Cabinet Committee on Security discussed the issue over three weeks ago. On Islamabad's support to the USA's anti-terrorism campaign, Mr Fernandes said: "Pakistan has again become the cat's paw for the USA to destroy the Frankenstein's (monster — meaning the Taliban) they jointly fathered." It has swallowed perhaps the "most bitter pill" in its 54 years' of existence. — SNS & PTI

that "modest" ground troops have been deployed in Afghanistan. He didn't rule out a more expansive ground campaign. Pentagon said the planes had targeted caves and tunnels in their bid to destroy command centres of the Taliban and

bomb had destroyed a water supply centre in Veni Hihar village.

UK advice: The British defence minister, Mr Geoff Hoon, said in Washington today that the campaign should take into account the sensitivities in the Muslim world about bombing Afghanistan during Ramadan.

New list: The USA has released a new list of about 200 persons it suspected linked to the 11 September terror attacks, Britain's financial regulator said.

Bush-Musharraf: Mr Bush will meet General Pervez Musharraf in New York on 10 November to discuss the anti-terrorism campaign. A day before, the US President will meet Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee.

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Pak curbs lifted

WASHINGTON, Oct. 30. — Mr George W Bush has lifted the remaining economic sanctions on Pakistan and announced \$1 million economic aid programmes. The curbs, imposed after Gen. Pervez Musharraf's coup in 1999, will remain suspended for two years.

Last month, the USA had lifted the sanctions imposed on India and Pakistan after the 1998 nuclear tests.

Announcing the economic assistance programmes, a state department spokesman said they were aimed at strengthening Pakistan. This gives President Bush the flexibility to authorise additional aid to Pakistan. — UN

Pakistan asked to take action against Dawood: Blackwill

Times News Network

MUMBAI: U.S. ambassador to India Robert Blackwill indicated here on Monday that his government had already asked the Pakistani administration to take action against Dawood Ibrahim, Tiger Memon and others responsible for the Mumbai blasts of March 1993.

Asked why Washington was not pressuring the Pakistani government to extradite Dawood and other accused, Mr Blackwill replied that he could not disclose the conversations which the Bush administra-

‘ It is wrong to look at Washington’s ties with New Delhi and Islamabad as a hyphenated one. An improvement in America’s relationship with Pakistan does not mean that ties with India would be adversely affected ’

— Robert Blackwill



Hemant Shirodkar

tion had had with Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf. But significantly, he stated that his government did not discriminate between terrorists and nations which shielded them. Its global war against terrorism would target both, he added.

Mr Blackwill said the U.S. did not want to dictate the nature of the new government in Kabul. But it should be as broad-based as possible. Asked to clarify Washington’s statement that it was not opposed to moderate Taliban elements being part of the new set-up, Mr Blackwill said these were persons who were way down the Taliban hierarchy, who were not ideologically committed. In any case, it was for the Afghan people to decide on the new dispensation, he observed.

When it was pointed out that even after a protracted campaign of bombardment of Afghanistan the U.S. was nowhere near ferreting out Osama bin Laden, Mr Blackwill said President George W. Bush had made it amply clear at the very start of the operations that it would be a long drawn affair. “But we are not in doubt about the outcome of the war,” he said exuding confidence. He indicated that the onset of Ramzan would not deter U.S. forces from bombing Afghanistan. The Taliban observed no such restraint and there was no

saying what it would do if the bombardment was halted, he said.

He said the U.S. could not be frightened by anthrax powder and added that in any case, the number of such cases was small. “But we will not be deterred from our attack on evil,” he asserted.

Mr Blackwill said the nuclear establishment of Pakistan was “safe and secure” and there was no cause for alarm. He said it was wrong to look at Washington’s ties with New Delhi and Islamabad as a hyphenated one. An improvement in America’s relationship with Pakistan did not mean that ties with India would be adversely affected, he said. But the September 11 terrorist strikes had resulted in an “unprecedented” bonding between India and the U.S., diplomatically, militarily and a myriad other ways, he said.

“The relationship between the two countries has transformed comprehensively and in an intimate way,” he observed. Without referring to Kashmir, he said America’s war against terrorism encompassed India’s campaign against internal terrorism. He said more outfits would be included in the list of terrorist organisations. The U.S. has already included the Jaish-e-Mohammed in the list. “Stay tuned,” he said.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

30 OCT 2001

It's official, American war against Taliban is going badly, says report

WASHINGTON: The U.S. war against terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden and the Taliban is currently going badly, American officials have said.

The U.S. had suffered a week of setbacks, followed by the capture and execution of powerful Afghan opposition leader Abdul Haq, which "tested U.S. patience and its plan of attack," *The Washington Post* quoted them as saying.

"Despite 20 days of punishing airstrikes, the U.S. military has yet to really engage the Taliban," it quoted administration officials as saying.

"As the campaign enters its fourth week, with the Muslim holy month of Ramzan and winter fast approaching, the Bush administration has begun to hunker down and admit to itself what it has

repeatedly insisted in public—that the war against the Taliban and the terrorists it shelters will be neither

Bombing kills nine children

DOHA: Nine children were among at least 15 Afghans killed in a U.S. bombing raid on Kabul at dawn on Sunday, the Qatar-based satellite television Al Jazeera reported.

Meanwhile, over 10,000 heavily armed Pakistani tribals lined up near the border to join the Taliban on Sunday. The tribals, including some retired army officials, armed with automatic weapons and swords converged at Bajaur in the North West Frontier Province. (Agencies)

short nor easy," the report said.

"We are kind of like wrestlers, with totally different styles," said one official referring to the U.S. and the Taliban militia. "We are still trying to figure out whether leverage point is on these guys. We haven't found it yet."

The Post said that time may not be on the administration's side, "especially as key Muslim allies in the anti-terrorism war, most notably Pakistan and Egypt, begin to demonstrate open impatience with the pace and results of the campaign."

Analysts noted that the U.S., with its deep faith in Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, followed his advice and the CIA worked with the ISI to secure major defections. The plan flopped and the Pakistanis could not deliver. (PTI)

Abdul Haq fell victim to botched CIA plan, say Pakistani officials

US bombs hit homes, kill nine children

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PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 28. — The US strikes on Afghanistan today killed at least 15 civilians, including nine children, even as American officials admitted that the war against the Taliban and Osama bin Laden was going badly.

Three explosions rocked Kabul in the morning and a bomb hit a residential area destroying an entire family comprising the parents and six children. *Al Jazeera TV* showed pictures of severed limbs among the ruins of houses.

Yesterday, 10 people, including a 25-year-old woman, were killed and several injured when a jet mistakenly fired a missile on a Northern Alliance-held village, Khan Agaha, about 80 km from Kabul. The village is close to the Taliban frontlines.

(Pakistani Intelligence officials have blamed a botched CIA operation for the execution of Northern Alliance leader, Abdul Haq, who had slipped into Afghanistan to lure tribals away from the Taliban, a report from Washington adds.

(The *Washington Post* quoted officials as having said that the militia had organised a sting operation to tempt Haq to cross into Afghanistan. Haq's body has been buried by the Taliban.)

A bomb dropped by American planes went astray and hit two houses at a village 80 km north-east of Kabul killing a woman.

New front: US warplanes opened up a new front in the war against the Taliban today, dropping 10 bombs on militia positions in north-east Afghanistan.

Besides Kabul and the strategic northern town of Mazar-e-Sharif, the jets also pounded Kandahar after two days. CNN reported several explosions



A father mourns the death of four children, killed in a bombing raid by US jets in north Kabul on Sunday. — AP/PTI

were heard in the western part of the city. The raids on Kabul, Kandahar and Mazar-e-Sharif came a day after the USA launched its heaviest strikes ever in the campaign.

The Taliban, has, however showed no signs of wearing out. Its ambassador in Pakistan, Mr Abdul Salam Zaeef, has ruled

out any compromise, saying the militia hadn't evolved any plans to end the strikes.

More than 10,000 armed Pakistani tribals have lined up near the Afghan border, waiting to join the Taliban against the anti-terror coalition. Besides, about 3,000 tribal militants blocked the strate-

gic Karakoram Highway — part of the Silk Route — for the fourth day today to protest against the US campaign.

ISI report: The ISI has reportedly submitted a report to General Pervez Musharraf, saying the US strikes have failed to break the Taliban's resolve. The *Washington Post* quoted an offi-

cial as having said that civilian casualties in Afghanistan were feeding anti-US sentiments and boosting Pashtun resolve to resist any US-backed political arrangement in post-Taliban Afghanistan.

■ More reports on pages 5 and 8

THE STATESMAN

29 OCT 2001

Germ war warning systems fall short of requirement

Kenneth Chang & Andrew Pollack
Washington, October 28

THE AUTONOMOUS Pathogen Detection System can identify multiple airborne biological agents. The United States has spent hundreds of millions of dollars trying to develop early warning detectors for biological attacks — on Friday it erected some around the Pentagon — but so far the systems are far from perfect, scientists say. That people infected with anthrax are likely to survive if they are promptly treated has reinforced a broad agreement among scientists that the best defence against a biological attack is an early warning system.

But designing and building such a system has proved difficult. Current detection systems, like the devices put around the Pentagon, are bulky, expensive, slow to discern problems and prone to false warnings. Experts say they are years away from achieving their goal — the equivalent of a smoke detector for biological weapons. But if they could produce such a device, it could transform some threats, like anthrax, from weapons of mass destruction to scary nuisances. Without stealth, anthrax makes for a feeble weapon. In an attack, a cloud of finely milled anthrax would descend, invisible and odourless. People would eventually turn up at doc-

tors' offices and hospitals, reporting flu-like symptoms. By the time the proper diagnosis was made, perhaps days later, the anthrax spores would have germinated into bacteria, the bacteria would be producing toxins and the toxins would be doing their deadly work in the body. "Almost always it's too late," said Dr Alan P Zelicoff, a physician and expert on biological arms at the Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque. So for a biological attack, experts agree, warning systems are crucial. The ideal, they say, would be something that works like a smoke detector, an inexpensive device that quietly samples the air and sounds a warning only when

something dangerous is found. "I don't think we're anywhere near the smoke detector for bio," said Dr Stephen S Morse, director of the Center for Public Health Preparedness at Columbia University, who once ran a Pentagon research programme on ways to detect and diagnose pathogens. The biggest problem is differentiating between the hordes of more or less harmless germs normally in the air from dangerous bacteria — often their close relatives. The military has spent hundreds of millions of dollars to develop detectors. The truck-based system stationed at the Pentagon can identify four biological agents in less than 45 minutes,

according to the latest annual report from the Pentagon to Congress on the status of chemical and biological defenses. Some air bases use a network of these sensors and compare their readings, to cut down on false warnings. Another system tries to use light to detect aerosol clouds from miles away, but it cannot tell whether the clouds contain pathogens. The Pentagon's inspector general last year criticised development of a new, more advanced system known as the Joint Biological Point Detection System for achieving only one of 10 critical goals. It broke down often, failed to identify lethal pathogens and sometimes

gave false warnings when no danger existed. That report was based on two-year-old data, and "in the last two years, we have made significant progress," said Col Stephen V Reeves of the Army, who manages the Joint Program Office for Biological Defence. Eleven units, which weigh about 300 pounds each, are being evaluated at the Dugway Proving Grounds in Utah. Colonel Reeves said he believed the system was "very close" to meeting all of the critical goals, including a 90 percent accuracy rate. **US drops cipro for doxycycline:** Health officials in Washington have replaced anti anthrax drug

ciprofloxacin with doxycycline. "People are going to be switched from cipro to doxycycline because it can be more easily tolerated," district of Columbia chief health officer Ivan walks told CNN yesterday. "New folks starting on medication will be starting on doxycycline, including the nine judges from the Supreme Court," Walks said. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has approved three antibiotics to treat anthrax: cipro, doxycycline and penicillin. "There might be some concern regarding cipro if the drug is used too widely," CDC spokeswoman Kathy Harbin said. **USA Today & AFP**

Pak minister urges US to rethink attacks

Islamabad, October 28

A SENIOR Pakistani Minister has asked the US to review its three-week-long military campaign in Afghanistan as it has failed to destroy the Taliban and crack down on the al-Qaida. Minister for Interior Affairs Moinuddin Haider told a meeting in Lahore yesterday that the US objective of waging a war on Afghanistan does not seem to have been achieved. "Now the world, including Pakistan, has started thinking that whatever is happening in Afghanistan is not good. The Muslims are upset over the large number of civilian casualties," he said. "Like other Muslims of the world, our hearts are throbbing over civilian casualties and difficulties faced by Afghanistan due to the war. The Afghans have survived despite heavy air strikes because their determination is strong," Haider, a close confidante of Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, denied Islamabad providing maps and information on Osama bin Laden's hideouts to the US. "Neither we nor many Afghans know the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden. The situation would not have been the same after three weeks of heavy bombardment had we given the secret information to the US," he said. Haider denied that the US was using Pakistani air bases for military operations. "The US is occasionally using the air bases of Panni, Baddin and Jacobabad for only rescue and search operations," he said. Pakistan's air force was on high alert to take action on any plane violating the air space in sensitive areas. "Pakistan will never compromise on its nuclear programme. The ground preparations are complete to face any adventure or attack by India." Haider said Pakistan had allowed religious freedom to all political parties and the press was functioning independently. On the refugees pouring into the country, Haider said, "We have been looking after 2.5 million Afghan refugees for the last two decades." **PTI**

Civilians die as Osama eludes Americans

Kabul, October 28

CIVILIAN CASUALTIES mounted in Afghanistan over the weekend as more American bombs went off-target, hitting homes not only in Kabul and other Taliban-controlled territory but also in a village controlled by the Opposition Northern Alliance. A US bomb crashed through a flimsy mud-brick home in Kabul on Sunday, blowing to bits seven children and their father as they ate breakfast, their mother said. US bombers killed 12 civilians in two early morning raids on the Afghan capital. The blast that killed the family also destroyed their neighbour's house, killing two children there, witnesses said. The house was in a residential area called Qalayeh Khatir near a hill where the hardline Taliban militia had placed an anti-aircraft gun. A civilian was killed on Saturday when US planes mistakenly bombed a village north of the city in territory controlled by the Northern Alliance, residents said. Al-Jazeera television of Qatar had earlier reported that 10 civilians were killed by a stray US bomb in the same area. "What shall I do now? Look at their savageness," wailed the woman who lost her children and husband in Kabul as the corpses were pulled from the smouldering wreckage of her home and wrapped in shrouds. "They killed all of my children and husband," she said. "The whole world is responsible for this tragedy. Why are they not taking any decision to stop this?" The killing of yet more civilians is likely to increase calls from Islamic groups and aid agencies for a halt to the bombing. Sobs racked the body of a middle-aged man as he cradled the head of his baby, its dust-covered body dressed only in a blue diaper, lying beside the bodies of three other children, their colourful clothes layered with debris from their shattered homes. The attacks were launched three weeks ago against Afghanistan's ruling Taliban in retaliation for sheltering Osama



Men mourn over the bodies of four children killed in a US bombing raid on Kabul on Sunday.

bin Laden, the suspected mastermind behind the September 11 attacks on the United States that killed some 5,000. Men digging graves for the children were angry. "Your filming makes no difference. No body runs it. Just get lost," one said to a Reuters reporter.

Two other civilians died when a bomb hit the minibus in which they were attempting to flee Kabul with their family. A reporter said one woman was killed and 10 people injured when warplanes mistakenly bombed the tiny hamlet of Ghanikhel controlled by the

Northern Alliance on Saturday. About 100 locals gathered in the cemetery for the funeral of Kukuqul, who died when her house was struck by a huge blast between 4 and 5 p.m. The United States and its allies have been attacking frontline Taliban positions north of Kabul

for a week, dropping powerful explosives from high in the sky to avoid the Taliban's meagre air defenses. "There has only been one explosion on opposition territory," Haji Kahar, an opposition foreign ministry spokesman based in Jabal-us-Saraj,

said. "One woman was killed and around eight people were injured in the town of Ghanikhel." The Taliban say hundreds of Afghan civilians have been killed by stray US bombs or missiles. US officials call the figure exaggerated. **Reuters**

'War against Taliban going badly'

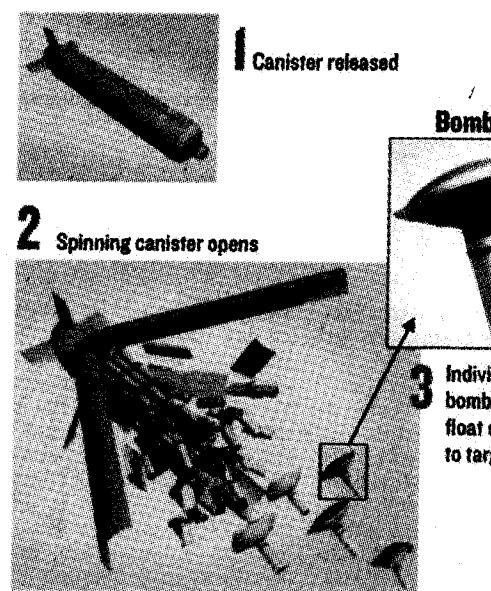
Washington, October 28

THE US war against terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden and the Taliban is currently going badly, American officials have said. The US had suffered a week of setbacks, followed by the capture and execution of powerful Opposition leader Abdul Haq, which "tested US patience and its plan of attack," the Washington Post quoted them as saying. "Despite 20 days of punishing airstrikes, the US military has yet to really engage the Taliban," it quoted administration officials as saying. "As the campaign enters its fourth week, with the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and winter fast approaching, the Bush administration has begun to hunker down and admit to itself what it has repeatedly insisted in public — that the war against the Taliban and the terrorists it shelters will be neither short nor easy," the report said. "We are kind of like wrestlers, with totally different styles," said one official referring to the US and the Taliban militia. "We are still trying to figure out whether leverage point is on these guys. We haven't found it yet." The Post said that time may not be on the administration's side. "Especially as key Muslim allies in the anti-terrorism war, most notably Pakistan and Egypt, begin to demonstrate open impatience with the pace and results of the campaign." Analysts noted that the US with its deep faith in Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf followed his advice and the CIA worked with ISI to secure major defections. The plan flopped and the Pakistanis could not deliver. The Washington Times, meanwhile, said US military forces turned down requests from Haq for air strike support against the Taliban. **PTI**

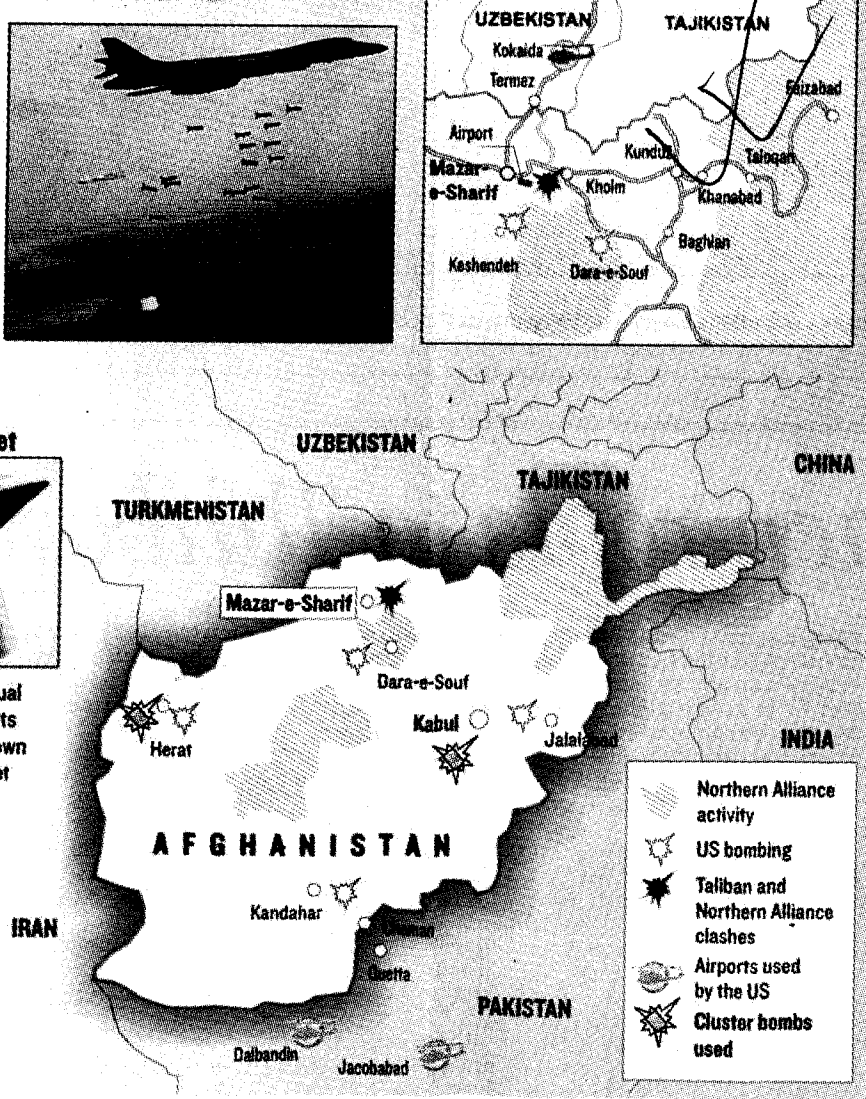
CLUSTER BOMBS

Cluster bombs, designed to scatter explosives over a large area, are among the weapons that US military forces use in Afghanistan.

How cluster bombs work
Explosives called bomblets are packed into a large canister, which opens to release the bomblets after being dropped from a plane. Cluster bombs come in a variety of shapes and sizes, typically weighing about 450 kg and containing about 200 bomblets.



Bomblets are usually about 8 in/20 cm long and have parachute-like devices attached. They can cover a wide area and are designed to break into small metal fragments upon detonation.



Media turns out to be the loser in this war

Anand K Sahay
Dushanbe/Tashkent, October 28

A FEATURE of the war in Afghanistan, especially that concerning the northern part of the country, is the absence of any authorised information to the media. The inevitable consequence of the opaqueness being practised by the countries most closely involved with the conflict is that the media is left to fend for itself. More than a thousand journalists from across the world who have been in and out of northern Afghanistan, and Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, since the US air bombardment began on October 7 have had to rely perforce on official sources at these centres which, as a rule, decline to be identified. Predictably, the propaganda element — or sometimes downright impressionistic attitudes — rules the roost in journalistic despatches. Journalists billeted at Hotel Tajikistan in Dushanbe, or at the Sheraton or the Orzu in Tashkent, are often heard to complain that they find it impossible to crosscheck what they hear from sources. This is also true of Western correspondents who generally support the war against terrorism.

On-the-ground verification of the military situation is, of course, ruled out as journalists are not allowed to most of Afghanistan, and are certainly far away from an area as crucial as Mazar-e-Sharif in Northern Afghanistan, which has emerged as a prime pitch of conflict. Several ambassadors at a diplomatic reception at Tashkent last night confessed that they did not quite know what to believe, and that no one was keen to let them know much either. The US embassy at Tashkent has put in place a system of periodic "deep background" briefings to which only a handful of journalists are invited. If the world's leading democracy and sole superpower relies on media manipulation, the Russians, Chinese, Indians, Pakistanis, and the Northern Alliance in general prefer to bypass the media altogether. As a result, the dissemination of relatively unadorned information to readers, viewers or listeners has become a major casualty in this war. Crucial questions naturally go unaddressed at the level of news or factual information. For instance, how much longer will the US air bombardment continue since the few strategic assets

the Taliban possessed have already been wiped out several times over? Why are US bombers not going for the Taliban armour? Will the US infantry be involved in the fighting eventually? Other questions of value are: Is the Northern Alliance actually being held back from the fighting by America? What is the extent of US-Russian coordination in the war effort, and the simultaneous diplomatic moves being made to fashion Kabul's political future? What the sustained bombardment has done to the poverty in the region is another key question that officials do not give much thought to, as they ponder the state of the war. A British television journalist yesterday said that a US fighter jet mistakenly fired a missile into Afghan territory controlled by the Northern Alliance, reportedly killing a family and wounding as many as 20 others. Jeff Meade of Sky News said he was in Bagram near Jalal Seraj late in the afternoon when he saw an F-18 Hornet fire a missile that was headed in the wrong direction, into the area of the anti-Taliban forces. Sky broadcast film of the fighter jet, clearly visible in sky above their cameraman, as it fired the weapon, but the impact wasn't visible.

CIA gets licence to kill in 40 countries

Washington, October 28

THE CIA can now kill terrorists in about 40 countries, The Washington Post reported today. President George W Bush has authorised CIA to carry out targeted killings of terrorists and possibly their financiers in about 40 countries. The directive broadens the class of potential targets beyond Osama bin Laden and his immediate circle of aides, and also beyond the present boundaries of the fight in Afghanistan. "Armed with new authority from President Bush for a global campaign against al-Qaida, the CIA is contemplating clandestine missions expressly aimed at killing specified individuals for the first time since the assassination scandals and the 1970s," The Washington Post reported. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said, "It is certainly within the President's powers to direct that, in our self-defence." It may be possible that the instruments of targeted killings will be "foreign agents," the CIA's term for non-employees who act on its behalf. But there is a debate within the CIA and the Government as to how wide should the Government draw the circle around Osama and in which countries. **PTI**

Source: Federation of American Scientists, Human Rights Watch

Lockheed beats Boeing to record jet contract

Washington, October 27

THE PENTAGON chose Lockheed Martin Corp over Boeing Corp on Friday to build its high-tech, next-generation fighter jet, a contract that will be worth at least \$200 billion, the largest in Defence Department history.

Air Force Secretary James G. Roche announced Lockheed was the winner of an \$18.9 billion engineering and manufacturing development contract that eventually is expected to lead to the go-ahead to build 3,000 supersonic F-35 jets with radar-evading capabilities. The first planes are to be delivered in 2008.

Roche didn't release details of why Lockheed was picked but said during the review process its proposal "emerged continuously as the clear winner." He applauded both companies' efforts and said they will be briefed in detail on the decision in coming weeks, he said.

The F-35 will replace the aging fighter jets of the Air Force, Navy and Marines, albeit with modifications to fit the needs of each branch. It also will be used by Britain's Royal Air Force and Navy, which want 150 of the planes. Britain has committed \$2 billion toward development.

Lockheed and Boeing waged a long and costly advertising and lobbying campaign for the contract, which establishes Lockheed as the nation's sole fighter jet manufacturer.

Lockheed, based in Bethesda, has said the contract would add up to 9,000 jobs at its Lockheed Martin Aeronautics division in Fort Worth, Texas, which currently employs 11,000. Employees there gathered to watch the announcement and burst into cheers when Lockheed was chosen.

Lockheed will develop the jet with Northrup Grumman Corp. and BAE Systems of Great Britain.

The Defense Department gave Boeing and Lockheed \$660 million each in 1996 for research and development of prototypes that could take off quickly, land vertically and on carrier decks, throw off radar and provide all the high-tech cockpit gadgetry demanded by modern warfare.

The plane is designed to replace the Air Force's F-16 and A-10, the Navy's F/A-18 and the Marine Corps' AV-8B Harrier.

Boeing's test model, dubbed the X-32, is more compact than Lockheed's X-35. The X-32 has a gaping air intake on the front and dual lift nozzles underneath, while the X-35 achieves its short takeoffs and vertical landings with a single thruster and a lift fan at the top of the plane.

Both Boeing and Lockheed's planes for the Marines, the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy can land vertically. Versions for the Air Force and Navy are designed to land conventionally.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

7 8 OCT 2001

AP

US fears anthrax could be a domestic affair...

S Rajagopalan
 Washington, October 27

MS/10
 warning a fortnight ago, believes the danger has not passed.

The Bush administration has been speaking in different voices on the subject. Bush himself suspected Osama's hand. "I would not put it past him," he has said even while admitting the absence of hard evidence. His deputy, Dick Cheney, too, is on record that Osama's men are trying their hand at bio-terrorism.

But those connected with investigations, including Attorney-General John Ashcroft and FBI director Robert Mueller, have been discounting the Osama factor with varying degrees of emphasis. Apparently, none of the intelligence inputs reaching FBI and CIA has supported the Osama hypothesis.

The Post quoted officials as saying that the evidence so far also does not point to either Iraq or Russia. There has been considerable media focus on Iraq, which had reportedly stuffed anthrax in missiles fired at

Americans during the Gulf War. But investigators have only crossed out candidates in the search for the agencies behind the bioterrorist attacks. With more and more cases surfacing, it is unclear if more anthrax-laced envelopes had been mailed than those found.

Authorities have so far linked all the anthrax exposures in Washington to a single source, the high-grade bacterium that was mailed to Senator Daschle. This package is believed to have contaminated other mail at the city's main mail sorting facility.

However, the discovery of a new strain of pulmonary anthrax in a contract worker at an off-site facility of the State Department has thrown up the possibility of more than one anthrax letter having been sent to Washington. That hypothesis gains ground as the Supreme Court has also been shut down, the third high-profile institution to be contaminated.



AP PHOTO
 Malaysia Fire and Rescue Department personnel watch a man being bathed after powdery substances were found at the Empire Tower office in Kuala Lumpur on Saturday.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

U.S. carries out 'heaviest' air strikes

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 27. With the air strikes against Afghanistan entering the fourth week, the U.S. today stepped up its attacks, believed to be the heaviest since the start of the campaign.

American jets pounded targets and Taliban positions north of Kabul. They attacks were focussed on the Sia Ku Hill that overlooks Bagram airport, held by the Opposition. The Northern Alliance is unable to use it because the Taliban controls positions on the hill.

The strikes began early with the initial focus on the frontlines and positions around Kabul. Northern Alliance commanders have said that the Taliban was moving troops to the frontlines to reinforce positions against them.

There is apprehension in some quarters that the U.S. has got bogged down in Afghanistan. This comes in the backdrop of the capture and subsequent execution of a respected anti-Taliban leader, a show of defiance by the Taliban that has raised a few eyebrows here.

With Britain, and perhaps even Australia, committing ground troops, a confident U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, has taken the position that the air strikes were eroding the Taliban's strength and setting the stage for the defeat of the terror network, the Al-Qaeda. "We're slowly but surely dismantling Taliban defences, military installations, the Taliban command and control structure — all aimed at bringing the Al-Qaeda criminals to justice," Mr. Bush told business, trade and agricultural leaders at the White House on Friday.

Mr. Bush, who later left the White House for Camp David to spend the weekend, asked for patience. "The American people are



Over 5,000 Pakistani men, many of them armed with assault rifles, set out of village of Temergarah on Saturday for the Afghan frontier, vowing to fight a holy war against the U.S. — AP

going to have to be patient. They're going to have to be determined, just like our military is. And with that patience and with that determination, we will eventually smoke them out of the holes and get them and bring them to justice."

Search on for American

DPA, AFP, Reuters report:

The Taliban militia denied killing five opposition commanders in the Samangan province, the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) reported. A Kabul-based spokesman for the Taliban, Mullah Amir Khan Muttaqi, told AIP that the information was wrong.

AIP had reported earlier that the Taliban had hanged five opposition commanders and taken

15 of their fighters prisoners.

The reports of the hanging came a day after the Taliban executed the Afghan resistance hero, Abdul Haq. The Taliban also warned supporters of Afghanistan's ex-King, Mr. Zahir Shah, to stay out of the country, the AIP reported. Highlighting the capture of Abdul Haq, the Taliban intelligence chief, Qari Ahmadullah, insisted the militia had spies in every district. "We warn you not to intend to come here; stay away from your dangerous intentions. Otherwise you will face grave consequences," he said in a statement.

'ICRC warehouses hit'

The U.S. military said that its fighters and B-52 bombers had

mistakenly bombed six warehouses used by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and a nearby residential area in Kabul. Two of the warehouses had been mistakenly bombed by U.S. aircraft only 10 days earlier, the Central Command said.

Mullah Omar calls for holy war

CAIRO, OCT. 27. The leader of the Taliban, Mullah Mohammed Omar, called for a "holy war" and said that the U.S., Russia, India and Israel were on his list of terrorist states, a Taliban spokesman told Al-Jazeera, the Arabic 24-hour news channel. — DPA

THE HINDU

28 OCT 2001

LONG WAR AHEAD

SR 6 W 10 Russia takes a hand

GENERAL Musharraf may be looking at a torrid winter this year, as his plea to the US-led coalition to wrap up the Afghan campaign before 17 November, the onset of Ramzan, stands little chance of being realised. He and his predecessors have done a good job of setting up and training the Taliban — perhaps too good a job. Taliban have so far shown little sign of buckling under pressure. For a long time the US, on Pakistani prompting, desisted from bombing frontline Taliban positions. It also yielded to Pakistani pressure that there was an animal called the “moderate Taliban” members which could join a future government. The Pakistanis have come up with a self-serving formula: government posts would be divided equally among the Northern Alliance, Pushtun tribesmen from southern Afghanistan, and “moderate Taliban”. But the Taliban is no Humpty-Dumpty; it is not splitting as Musharraf prophesied. Meanwhile, Russia has taken an unexpected hand. President Putin flew from the APEC meeting to meet the man most of the world, if not the US, recognises as Afghanistan’s president, Burhanuddin Rabbani. Putin promised Rabbani what has not been forthcoming from the US so far — arms and aid for the Northern Alliance. Also, significantly, he saw no place for “moderate Taliban” in a future Afghan government. Putin’s upping the ante has undercut Colin Powell’s strategy and forced the US to step up support for the alliance. Regarding the Ramzan deadline, defence secretary Rumsfeld has acerbically noted that Muslim nations and groups do not stop fighting either with others or among themselves during the holy month.

SR 6 W 10 If a full-fledged ground assault is necessary to flush out the Taliban, the question is who will undertake the task. The use of US soldiers on a large scale is likely to incite Afghan opposition and bog them down in what has been described as “Vietnam with snow”. The preferred option is a rearmed Northern Alliance backed by defecting Taliban troops, if any exist, and US air action, while specialist American and British commando units take on the Al Qaeda. Despite reports of “stinging” strikes around Kandahar, US commandos have hardly achieved anything yet. The ragtag alliance forces, which is treating the intense landmine and trench type fortifications around Kabul with deserved respect, badly needs to be re-equipped. An alternate government has to be organised. In short, plenty of work all around, and the war is likely to drag on into winter. Which brings us back to Musharraf, who will face bigger protests from *jihadis*. Eventually, he will have little option but to take them on.

THE STATESMAN

Massive air raids on Kabul; Rumsfeld flip flop on Osama Pak can't foist govt on Afghanistan: Powell

Agencies

WASHINGTON, Oct. 25. — The USA has said Pakistan cannot again “foist a government of its choice” on post-Taliban Afghanistan.

“The next Afghan government can't be dictated by Pakistan,” the secretary of state, General Colin Powell, yesterday told the House International Relations Committee.

The Pakistani President is pushing for the inclusion of moderate Taliban in post-war dispensation in Afghanistan which would be friendly to Islamabad. Gen Powell said Pakistan has a passing interest in Afghanistan because of its proximity. Hence they can't stay indifferent, but “they can't do what they did before, namely foisting a government of their choice,” he added.

Gen Powell said Afghanistan's neighbours and countries like China and Russia must be consulted in the formation of a post-war government in Afghanistan and the UN is taking a lead role.

Earlier, speaking at a joint press conference with his British counterpart, Mr Jack Straw, Gen Powell reiterated that the military operation in Afghanistan won't be curtailed during Ramzan as pleaded by Gen Pervez Musharraf.

The US defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, today distanced himself from his earlier remarks to a newspaper that the USA may not catch Osama bin Laden.

Mr Rumsfeld told the USA Today newspaper that it would be “very difficult” to capture or kill Osama. “It's a big world... There are lots of countries. He's got a lot of money, he's got a lot of people who support him, and I just don't know whether we'll be successful,” he was quoted as telling the newspaper.

However, at a Pentagon press briefing later Mr Rumsfeld said: “You bet, we expect to get them.”

US jets struck Kabul late tonight and strong detonations shook buildings in the

centre of the city.

At least seven waves of aircraft thundered overhead after 11 p.m., dropping bombs near the airport and other areas of the city in the heaviest raid on the capital in days. Taliban gunners returned fire, and mobile



THIS TOY DOESN'T PLEASE: A child with a toy gun and a poster of Bin Laden doesn't seem very happy. He is with his father at a demonstration in Islamabad on Thursday. — AP/PTI

anti-aircraft weapons could be heard moving about the darkened streets. The extent of damage could not be determined because of the curfew which prevents people from leaving their homes at night.

US aircraft also launched a second wave of attacks on Taliban positions near the frontline north of Kabul, witnesses said.

Western planes resumed flights over the Shomali Plain in the afternoon. Three explosions were heard at a Taliban position called Que Tutakhan overlooking Bagram Airport, about 30 to 40 km north of Kabul.

Today's raid was the fifth consecutive day of US-led air attacks on forward Taliban positions near the capital. The USA has also attacked suspected hideouts of Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan's eastern Paktia province bordering Pakistan.

France said today it had strengthened its Intelligence-gathering role in the US-led military action against Afghanistan, including the use of sophisticated Mirage IV-P spy planes.

Cluster bombs dropped by US warplanes on a village in western Afghanistan had killed nine civilians on Monday, the UN said today.

Pak detainee dead: A Pakistani, detained in connection with probes into 11 September attacks has died in his cell in a New Jersey prison. Officials said yesterday Muhammed Butt's death was related to heart condition.

ANOTHER ANTHRAX CASE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 25. — An employee at the US State Department's remote mail facility in suburban Virginia has been admitted to hospital with anthrax, a spokesman announced today. Mr Richard Boucher said the unidentified mail handler works at a facility in Sterling, Virginia and went to the hospital yesterday with flu-like symptoms. “He tested positive for the disease,” said the spokesman. The diagnosis marked the 13th known case of anthrax nationwide in the past few weeks. — AP

■ More reports on pages 5, 8
■ Editorial: Long war ahead, page 6

THE STATESMAN

US drops cluster bombs on Taliban frontlines

Opp forces might open second front against Taliban

Islamabad, October 25

THE US for the first time used cluster bombs on Taliban frontlines as it intensified airstrikes on the militia headquarters of Kandahar and the key town of Mazar-e-Sharif. A packed bus in Kandahar took an air hit that killed, according to the Taliban, everyone on board.

"At least 40, perhaps 50 people, might have been killed in the attacks though the exact numbers are not known," Taliban Education Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi was quoted as saying. A UN spokeswoman said in Islamabad that the cluster bombs killed nine civilians in a village.

As the US intensified its military campaign, Britain was reportedly poised to send ground troops in Afghanistan. BBC radio and television, quoting senior Defence sources, said around 600 Royal Marine commandos and several hundred special forces, currently engaged in exercise in Oman, were set for deployment. These forces include groups especially trained in mountain and winter warfare.

Simultaneously with the military campaign, diplomatic efforts gained momentum for a viable post-Taliban government. The Saudi Foreign Minister, Saud al-Faisal, is in Pakistan for talks with President Pervez Musharraf.

But the UN was concerned over the use of cluster bombs, and said unexploded bomblets from cluster bombs had trapped villagers near the western Afghan city of Herat. Cluster bombs are controversial weapons consisting of a canister which breaks apart to release a large number of small bombs. The UN official said eight people from the village had been killed in the American attack. The United Nations report of

Osama may be hard to catch: Rumsfeld

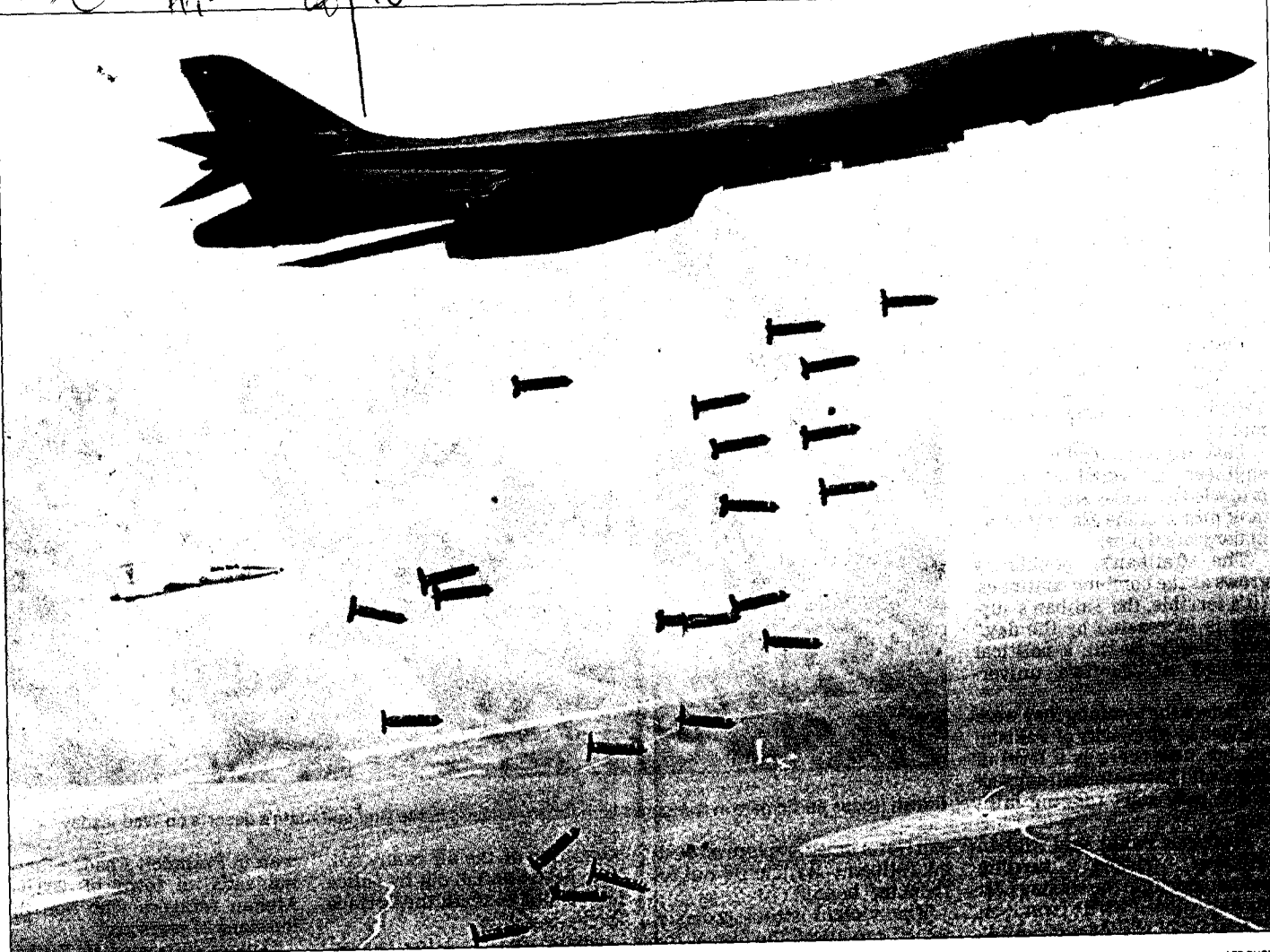
AFTER 18 DAYS of airstrikes on Afghanistan, American Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said on Wednesday that US forces might not catch Osama bin Laden. But he predicted that the Taliban regime harbouring bin Laden would be toppled.

In an interview with the USA Today editorial board, Rumsfeld cautioned repeatedly that it would be "very difficult" to capture or kill bin Laden. "It's a big world. There are lots of countries. He's got a lot of money, he's got a lot of people who support him, and I just don't know whether we'll be successful. Clearly, it would be highly desirable to find him." Even if bin Laden were killed, his terrorist network would carry on, Rumsfeld said. "If he were gone tomorrow, the same problem would exist."

President George W Bush said on September 18 that he wanted bin Laden "dead or alive."

But recently he has played down the importance of capturing bin Laden, the alleged mastermind behind the September 11 attacks, and stressed a less specific goal of smashing terrorism.

USA Today, Washington



A B-1B Lancer drops cluster bombs during a live fire exercise. The bombs are feared by ground troops for their awesome spread.

Taliban frontlines north of Kabul, including Bagram airbase and Keshendah and Dara-e-Souf closer to Mazar-e-Sharif, the Bakhtar news agency said. It also said that most of the bombs have not exploded. US raids struck targets in and around Kandahar early this

morning, in part targeting a fuel storage facility outside the city. The US fighters also pounded targets around the Afghan capital Kabul and struck Taliban military positions along the frontlines several km to the north. The Taliban also reported

overnight attacks at the western city of Herat and the provinces of Balkh and Samangan, where the opposition Northern Alliance is fighting the militia to open the road to Mazar-e-Sharif. There have been increasing accounts of Taliban fighters

moving troops and tanks into residential neighbourhoods, either to deter bombing or to lure American pilots into hitting civilian targets. Pentagon seemed surprised over the Taliban's tenacity. US Navy Rear Admiral John Stuffle-

been said: "I am a bit surprised at how doggedly they are hanging on to power. They have proven to be tough warriors."

"For Mullah Omar not to see the inevitability of what will happen surprises me," he said. "But we are prepared to take however long is required to bring the Taliban down."

The Admiral, who has promised that the air campaign will not be directed against residential areas in the city, expressed hope that civilians will turn on the Taliban in the cities as the conflict wears on. He said US forces will take action in the cities in a way that does not threaten locals. "It is not our intention to reduce the city to rubble while they hide in there. We will find clever ways to go after them."

He also expressed apprehension that the Taliban may poison food brought into Afghanistan for humanitarian relief and blame it on Americans.

The Taliban, however, rejected the US allegation, calling it "cynical propaganda". "No one is so cruel as to poison his own people. This is propaganda which proves America is nervous," Muttaqi told Afghan Islamic Press, a Pakistan-based news agency.

The Taliban have detained more than 100 people in Kandahar and threatened to execute anyone helping the US, a private news agency has reported. "As per Mullah Omar's decree, anyone found working for enemies will be executed after a summary trial," the South Asian Dispatch Agency quoted Mullah Abdul Razzak, an official of the Taliban interior ministry, as saying.

In London, Prime Minister Tony Blair indicated that the most likely outcome of the military campaign in Afghanistan is the death of Osama bin Laden.

Islamabad, October 25

ANTI-TALIBAN Afghan forces backed by America are preparing to open a second front of ground attack against the ruling militia. A senior rebel Pushtoon commander has already crossed into Afghanistan from Pakistan with a band of supporters.

Abdul Haq crossed into Afghanistan on October 21 with hundreds of well-armed supporters, to mount an offensive against Taliban in eastern Nangrahar province, unconfirmed reports said.

The Dawn, quoting Haq's associates from Peshawar, said he went towards Jalalabad with a large force. Haq is reported to have headed for Spingar mountains north of Jalalabad, which divides Afghanistan's Pakista and Nangrahar provinces.

Quoting an Afghan source, the daily said the Taliban got wind of Haq's presence in Nangrahar and mounted an operation to track him down. Their efforts so far appear to have failed, it said.

If Haq manages to open a second ground front against the Taliban in Pushtoon-dominated areas in addition to the resistance by Northern Alliance forces in northern Afghanistan, it could expedite the fall of Taliban on the ground as they have to spread out their meagre military assets, the daily said.

Forty-three-year-old Haq was commander of the Kabul region during and after the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Haq, who later went to Dubai and opened a business enterprise of his own, returned to Pakistan this month at the instance of the US to organise an uprising and armed opposition against Taliban, The Dawn said.

Afghan peace meeting backs King

Peshawar, October 25

INVOKING TRADITION to resolve a modern dispute, more than 1,000 Afghans today demanded an end to hostilities in Afghanistan and called on the country's former King, Zahir Shah, to help form a multi-ethnic Government.

They also demanded that "those foreigners who add more to our miseries" leave the country — a reference to Osama bin Laden and the mostly Arab members of the al-Qaida terrorist group hiding in Afghanistan. "They should not exploit the Afghan hospitality any longer," said a resolution they passed after the two-day conference for peace and national unity.

The all-male conclave endorsed the resolution in a jirga, or traditional meeting, after filing into Nishtar hall in Peshawar near the Afghan border.

Their one-page resolution outlined what they called the "building blocks" for a new Government that could help rebuild Afghanistan.

They feel King Zahir Shah, in exile in Rome since 1973, should join other eminent Afghan figures to play an "effective role, according to his moderate and balanced policy, to put an end to this crisis".

The "warring parties" of Afghanistan and USA should end their operations "as early as possible", including the "very important" task of disarming the Afghan capital, Kabul. They demand that political



The convener of the Afghan Peace Conference in Peshawar, Syed Ahmed Gilani (right), talks with other leaders during the meeting on Thursday.

activity to devise a new Government should replace military activity at the earliest. A loya jirga, (grand council of chiefs) be convened to decide the future of Afghanistan, they said.

The resolution did not directly advocate the fall of the Taliban regime, though members of the conference have made clear that is a key goal before a new Government can be formed. Participants — largely from

southern Afghan tribes with monarchist sympathies — were trying to prevent what they called "a political vacuum" in the event of the US-led military strikes unseating the Taliban.

"If that vacuum were filled by a particular group through military operation, it would turn to a new phase of bloodshed and disorder and would afflict our nation with new misfortune," the resolution said.

The "particular group" it referred to is the Northern Alliance.

Security forces checked IDs outside the hall and armed police watched the scene as men in flowing beards queued up for the meeting.

Some at the meeting criticised bin Laden for placing Afghanistan and its population in the international line of fire. AP

No room for Hekmatyar: Rabbani Ambassador

HT Correspondent New Delhi, October 25

GULBUDDIN HEKMATYAR is unacceptable as the President of a post-Taliban Afghanistan, said Masood Khalili, the Ambassador of the Burhanuddin Rabbani Government of Afghanistan, here today. Khalili said the former President had a bad image in the northern part of Afghanistan.

About King Zahir Shah, he said: "The King ruled for 42 years and tried to introduce democracy. We are examining the possibility of allowing him to head a formation, but he must prove to be active and effective."

He reiterated that the Northern Alliance is committed to installing a broad-based, multi-ethnic Government in Kabul. No neighbouring country, he said, with particular reference to Pakistan, should have any say in its formation.

He rejected the idea of a "moderate" Taliban. "You are either a Taliban or not. There are people at the lower levels who are too scared to protest. If they leave, they have to denounce the Tal-



Afghan Ambassador Masood Khalili gestures during a press conference in New Delhi on Thursday.

iban." Khalili directly accused the Pakistani ISI of fomenting international terrorism. "The Taliban will not survive without the ISI. Together they have developed the 'Islamic depth strategy' while the ISI has its own geo-political depth strategy."

Khalili, who addressed his first press conference after surviving the September 9 suicide attack by two alleged al-Qaida operatives, said Pakistan President Pervez

Musharraf's call for an end to the bombing of Taliban country by the beginning of the holy month of Ramzan should not be accepted.

"The Taliban is not Islamic. There is nothing in the Qur'an against killing terrorists in the month of Ramzan. Even the Prophet had ordered a mosque to be destroyed when it became known that a plot had been hatched inside it."

'A cameraman smiled... then there was a big bang'

HT Correspondent New Delhi, October 25

NORTHERN ALLIANCE Commander Ahmad Shah Masood had died of his injuries within hours of the bomb blast of September 9, but the official announcement was held back by 10 days for security reasons. This was confirmed today by Ambassador Masood Khalili, the only survivor in that incident.

The killers had been waiting for over a fortnight in Khwaja Bahauddin for an appointment. They had been searched before being let into the room where Masood waited for them. But the inexperienced Northern Alliance soldier could not detect the belt bomb worn by the man posing as the reporter. The photographer carried a big camera and his behaviour was quite unusual, recalled Khalili today.

Khalili was handed a paper containing about 15 questions written in English which he read out for the benefit of Masood. Seven or eight of them were about Osama bin Laden. Some of those recalled by the Ambassador were: "Why do you call him a terrorist?"

"Don't you think he is a respected man in the Islamic world?" "Is he not serving the cause of Islam?"

Masood, recalled Khalili, wanted to answer these questions and directed the cameraman to start filming. "There was a nasty smile on the face of the cameraman", Khalili recalled. The camera was placed unusually low. Just as the first poser was about to be fielded, there was an explosion. Khalili lost his consciousness, regained it, and passed out again. He recalls being on a helicopter with Masood laid out next to him.

Investigations by the Northern Alliance have not yet established a clear link between the al-Qaida and the killers. But the plot is believed to have been hatched in Europe after Khalili and Masood made a successful tour, raising the consciousness of governments on the need to support their fight against the Taliban-ISI-bin Laden combine.



Police officers don protective gear to investigate a suspicious package at the Associated Press office in London on Thursday. The package was later found to be clean.

US had made light of anthrax threat

Washington, October 25

HEALTH OFFICIALS here monitored increasing numbers of people for suspected anthrax today while John E Potter, the postmaster-general, acknowledged that he could not guarantee the safety of the mails. President Bush warned that the nation was "still under attack".

Their statements reflected the growing sense that Government officials had badly underestimated the threat posed by the anthrax contained in a handful of letters sent to Congress and media organisations in recent weeks. Two postal workers in Washington have died and at least two others have been infected.

Dr David Satcher, surgeon-general, said in hindsight, "we were wrong" not to have considered that a sealed envelope containing anthrax might pose a hazard as it passed through a post office.

Several scientists said today the letter sent to Senator Tom Daschle, Democrat of South

Patient discharged

A POSTAL department employee infected after inhaling anthrax, while working at a tabloid publishing company, was released from the hospital, his family said on Wednesday.

Ernesto Blanco (73) was released late on Tuesday after a 23-day stay and was reportedly recovering at his North Miami home. Blanco was hospitalised on October 1. Doctors initially believed his symptoms were from pneumonia. He hasn't decided on joining work at the office, where he contracted the disease.

AP, Boca Raton

Osama bought anthrax

OSAMA BIN Laden bought anthrax spores by mail about three years ago, according to one of his chief lieutenants, a British daily has reported. Osama paid \$3,500 to buy the bacteria through an Islamic separatist group in Indonesia and another \$7,000 for supplies of e-coli and salmonella from eastern Europe, the tabloid "Mirror" said on Thursday.

The disclosure came in a "confession" by Ahmad Ibrahim al-Najjar, a senior al-Qaida lieutenant who was jailed for life in Egypt last year.

AFP, London

Dakota contained anthrax that was advanced and highly dangerous, contradicting officials who had said over the past week that the substance was relatively primitive. Scientists said it had been altered to reduce its electrostatic charge, making the spores

less likely to clump together and more likely to float in the air. One expert said only the United States, Soviet Union and Iraq were known to have developed the necessary technique to do this. A Government official said the envelope sent to Daschle was

porous, and the spores inside small enough for germs to leak out even though it was taped.

Health officials here and in New Jersey said they were investigating at least a dozen cases of possible inhaled anthrax, including at least one person linked to the Senate, in addition to the two confirmed cases and two deaths among postal workers. Officials said another 20 people in Washington were being monitored.

Health officials widened antibiotic treatment to all workers in 120 institutions that receive bulk mail, including the Library of Congress. The decision was based on concerns that such mail might have been contaminated at the district's main processing centre on Brentwood Road, which handled the Daschle letter.

One other suspected anthrax case was reported in New York. Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said a second employee of The New York Post had probably contracted an anthrax infection of the skin.

Agencies

Food and fuel lifeline under attack

Bomb burst to starve Taliban

Washington, Oct. 24: As the tentacles of a suspected germ war campaign snaked towards White House, America carried out its fiercest air strikes yet on the Taliban's front line and supply depots in a concerted blitz to choke off the power base of the Afghan regime.

The Taliban admitted their forces were heavily outgunned but refused to hand over Osama bin Laden even at the cost of "every life in Afghanistan".

The UN said American bombs had hit a mosque in a military camp in the western Afghan city of Herat on Monday.

White House reported that traces of anthrax culture had been found at a remote military facility where all mail for the President and his staff is screened.

Preliminary tests of around 120 workers at White House mail facilities showed none had been exposed to anthrax, the administration said today, but warned: "Everyone needs to be alert."

The Pentagon said it had information that the Taliban might attempt to poison food aid and blame it on the US.

US jets roared over Taliban positions north of Kabul in the heaviest wave of bombings so far. But an opposition leader said the attacks were not enough for the launch of a ground offensive and doubted the impact of the raids.

The strikes, however, gave forces of the opposition Northern Alliance a chance to take time off their alert against the Taliban. Some of them played the traditional game of Buzkashi with scrums of 14 horses and their riders snatching the torn carcass of a young calf across a dusty field.

Opposition commander Abdul Mahfus said the raids were on Sia Ku and Pul Estekam. Both posi-

BEATING ABOUT THE BUSH



Washington, Oct. 24: "First of all," President Bush declared, "I don't have anthrax." A few minutes later, he repeated: "I don't have anthrax."

Then for a third time, perhaps to make sure he was understood, Bush ended a brief question-and-answer session with reporters by saying: "I don't have it."

Bush gave no indication of how he knew he was anthrax-free, and in a curious exchange in the Cabinet Room sidestepped questions on whether he had undergone testing for the bacteria.

"Mr President, have you been tested for anthrax?" a reporter asked.

"I don't have anthrax," Bush replied.

"So you've been tested, sir?" the reporter persisted.

"I don't have it," the President said, ending the session.

After that illuminating chat with journalists, Bush headed out of the White House for some chomp-chomp, true Texas style.

With his commerce secretary, family and friends, the President dined at Jeffrey's, which specialises in "contemporary Texas cuisine". Bush has been pressing Americans to resume their normal way of life and ventured out last night to set an example.

NYT NEWS SERVICE & REUTERS

tions lie just behind Taliban trenches facing opposition forces around the strategic airport of Bagram.

The Northern Alliance controls Bagram, but is unable to use the landing strip because of Taliban positions close by.

US forces are also targeting troops and supply lines of the Taliban ahead of the harsh winter. "The winter will be harder on the Taliban than it will be on us. If troops can't get bullets, fuel or food, what can they do?" a US official asked.

Another said high-technology "thermal" bomb targeting techniques, which use heat sensors to pinpoint troops and arms against

cooler surroundings, will have an easier task when snows begin.

US officials said defence planners did not expect the Taliban leadership to collapse before winter arrived next month.

But even if the Northern Alliance forces cannot take Mazar-e-Sharif or Kabul in the coming weeks, the fall of the Taliban will be hastened without means to resupply their forces, the officials said.

"The Taliban depend on their military. Despite bravado about how they sent Soviet troops running, this is a different day," a senior Pentagon official said.

NYT NEWS SERVICE & REUTERS
■ See Pages 4-6

THE TELEGRAPH

25 OCT 2001

Iraq now on US hit-list

ST-5
25/10

BROWNEN MADDIX
THE TIMES, LONDON

LONDON, Oct. 24. — Two brief, separate sets of remarks in Washington this week show how the ground is firming up for a "wider war" — that is, for attacking Iraq.

The State Department warning of Iraqi military movements, and noisy congressional criticism of Saudi Arabia and Egypt, are insignificant on their own. But they support a constituency for action against Saddam Hussain that does not have critical mass yet, but would swing into action fast if the Administration gave the signal.

It'd be wrong to suggest, as some have, that the Administration is spoiling for a fight with Saddam. It isn't. The well-publicised rifts over Iraq do not extend to the top. While the Bush Cabinet's focus is on Afghanistan, it is permitting itself a parallel exercise of considering what a second front might look like.

It is no secret that the deputy defence secretary, Mr Paul Wolfowitz, wants to make the removal of Saddam a clear goal. There are senior officials in the State Department who share his view, although they have kept below the parapet. Their main target has been the Secretary of State, Mr Colin Powell, who has spent the past two months building the coalition of support for the Afghan action. It is no secret that they have set out to give Powell a rough ride. If he has been tempted to ask, "Am I paranoid or are they out to get me?" the answer is easy: they're out to get him.

But the divisions do not yet go higher. Neither the defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, nor President Mr George Bush is spoiling for that fight.

More importantly, the USA does not appear to have any evidence of Iraqi involvement in the



A US safety watch ducks as an F/A18 Hornet launches from the deck of the *USS Roosevelt* on Wednesday. — AP/PTI

September 11 attacks. Perhaps anthrax? No — the State Department said this week there were no signs of "any clear linkage". Nor are there even mutterings about unpublished intelligence of a link. Given that, any move against Iraq would be opposed by Muslim countries.

It would destroy their support for Afghan action, and could de-

stabilise them, a nightmare the USA, with its dependence on Saudi oil, is not going to court. Mr Rumsfeld, in a bumpy trip around the region, found not a single state bordering Iraq that was keen on US strikes at Saddam.

He turned up in Turkey thinking there, at least, he might hear support for the notion, but no.

THE STATESIDE

25 OCT 2001

Harkat militants' bodies smuggled into Pakistan Taliban militiamen take civilian cover

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 24. — US warplanes pounded frontlines north of Kabul for the fourth day today amid reports that Taliban forces in the city were moving to residential areas to escape aerial attacks.

Harkat-ul-Mujahideen today said 22 of its "fighters" including several senior commanders, were killed when a bomb hit a house in Kabul where they had gathered to "devise a plan to fight the USA." A prominent Pakistani militant leader, Ustad Farooq, was among the dead.

The bodies of eight Harkat militants were smuggled into Pakistan through Mohmand Agency, a tribal area on the border, after Pakistani guards refused to allow them in. The border guards' refusal sparked protests in Karachi where police burst tear-gas shells to disperse 5,000 demonstrators.

A UN official said Taliban forces were moving into residential areas but the USA vowed to flush out Afghan fighters.

"We'll find other ways... to get at those who might decide to hide in residential areas," the US deputy director of Operations for the Joint Staff, Rear Admiral John Stufflebeem, said in Washington.

Northern Alliance forces traded fire with Taliban troops near a strategic air base north of Kabul. Mortar fire, artillery and gunfire were heard throughout the night along the front, reports said. The Alliance was trying to consolidate its positions south of the Bagram air base.

The Taliban said 12 people were killed when US planes bombarded a village near Deh Raud town early today. US aircraft carried out heavy raids on Kabul, and near Mazar-i-Sharif where the Taliban is



Afghans cross Kokcha river, 15 km from Opposition-controlled Dasht-e-Qala in north Afghanistan, on Wednesday. — AP/PTI

engaged in fierce battle with the Northern Alliance.

In Washington, Gen. Colin Powell said the USA does not see Ramzan as a deadline for halting or curtailing military operations, adds AFP

US planes have increased strikes against the Taliban and supply depots to choke the Taliban's powerbase before winter. "The winter will be harder on the Taliban than it will be on us. If troops can't get bullets, fuel or food, what can they do?" a US official said.

US commandos have set up a base in Helmand province in Afghanistan, Novosti Press said, quoting Qatar's *Al-Jazeera* TV, adds UNI from Abu Dhabi. More than 2000 US troops at an Uzbekistan base

are preparing to go into battle against the Taliban, an Uzbek serviceman said.

Tribal leaders, former Mujahideen commanders and leading Afghan exiles met in Peshawar today and backed the reinstatement of the former Afghan king, Zahir Shah, as Pakistan denied it was supporting some Pushtoo leaders to form a new government.

No Northern Alliance members were present. Representatives of the former king kept away from the meeting despite being invited.

"Bombs hit mosque": UN said US bombs had hit a mosque in a military camp and a village during attacks on Herat this week, adds Reuters.

Laden alive and safe: Osama

bin Laden is alive and safe after 18 days of US attacks on Afghanistan, the Afghan Islamic Press quoted a Taliban official as having said.

Anthrax: There's no guarantee that US mail is safe and the anthrax threat on the postal services means people should wash their hands after handling mail, the US postmaster general said today.

The US House of Representatives passed and sent to the Senate a Bill to expand the power of law enforcement agencies to combat terrorism, adds UNI

- Editorial: Enduring fiefdom, page 6
- More reports on pages 5 and 8

THE STATESMAN

25 OCT 2001

Powell tells India,
Pak. to observe
restraint

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

NEW YORK, OCT. 23. The Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, has urged both India and Pakistan to act with "enormous restraint" in spite of the tensions and has offered his help in getting a dialogue started between them.

"Obviously, there's tension between India and Pakistan still that flared up on my last night in Pakistan, on my way to India the next morning when we saw the firing over the Line of Control. At the same time, both sides are realising even though this is a very difficult issue for them, they can't let it get out of control. The stakes are too high", Gen. Powell told presspersons during a flight back from Shanghai where he had been for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum meetings.

"Both sides are committed to the coalition. Both sides are helping the United States and other coalition members. Both sides are working with the U.S. on a future for Afghanistan and both sides realise that for peace and stability in their part of the world, they've got to get this right. So I sense that even though there is tension, they have to act with enormous restraint", Gen. Powell said.

On a dialogue between India and Pakistan, Gen. Powell noted that "both sides said they are anxious to get a dialogue started. They are having a little difficulty getting that dialogue started. I will try to be helpful in that regard. I think they are both committed to the campaign against terrorism, and I was pretty satisfied with the trip."

The full range of issues, bilateral, regional and global, is expected to be discussed when the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, comes to Washington for a meeting with the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush.

Mr. Vajpayee is likely to arrive here on the night of November 7 from Russia.

THE HINDU

24 OCT 2001

Anthrax alarm stays put in US

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, Oct. 23. - As lawmakers return to work today in the US Capitol building, the House of Representatives and Senate office buildings will remain closed pending results of anthrax tests, congressional aides have said.

Aides yesterday said temporary space will be made available at the office of the General Accounting Office.

Authorities had hoped to get all anthrax tests results on Monday, but aides said at least an additional day would be needed.

The buildings were closed and tests were ordered after an anthrax-laced letter was sent to Senate Majority leader Mr Tom Daschle. "We are all being guided by science," said Lt Dan Nichols of the Capitol police. "The bottom line on this is science takes time."

"We have been advised it would be a prudent course of action to follow, and the House and Senate leaders concur, that the House and Senate Office buildings will not be opened to-

WS 29/10
SF-10
morrow," Nichols told a late-day news conference yesterday. He said investigators "are also trying to determine if there is a second letter".

Mr Daschle, a South Dakota Democrat whose staff opened an anthrax-laced letter on 15 October, expressed his condolences for the deaths of two postal workers in Washington who handled mail bound for Capitol Hill.



Firefighters in biochemical protective gear at a mock exercise with a dummy at Atsugi in Tokyo on Tuesday. - AP/PTI

THE STATISTICAL

24 OCT 2001

Britain joins the war but talks of post-Taliban peace in Afghanistan

By Rashmee Z. Ahmed
Times News Network

LONDON: In the most explicitly interventionist and internationalist vision for Afghanistan and the world after September 11, Britain has called for a lead role for the United Nations, a policy of constructive non-interference by India and other regional countries and a global coalition to foot an estimated re-building bill of \$20 billion.

In a so-called big ideas speech here before meeting U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell in Washington on Tuesday to discuss Afghanistan's future, British foreign secretary Jack Straw committed British forces to a sustained peacekeeping role in post-Taliban Afghanistan.

Mr Straw's remarks, to a carefully-chosen audience of senior diplomats, Arab ambassadors, military planners and leading international policy experts, came even as his

cabinet colleague, defence minister Geoff Hoon, indicated that British forces were preparing to join ground operations alongside American troops at a short notice.

Mr Straw was emphatic that "Britain is hoping to build the consensus" on Afghanistan's future, even as he offered an unabashed apology to the Afghan people that "we have let you down in the past".

He said that "the five permanent members of the U.N. security council, Afghanistan's neighbours and countries that are close to it, like India, are agreed that a broad-based self-sustaining government" was needed.

In a broad hint to the fiercely-competitive politicking of Pakistan, India, Iran and Russia, he said the greatest support they could offer Afghanistan was to refuse to play politics in a country that had continually suffered at the hands of outside powers, including British "intrigue" in the 19th century.

In yet another contradictory policy statement amid the blizzard of views emerging from Washington and London, Mr Straw said that "removing the Taliban was not a war aim" but the Allies wanted "a sufficient change in the Taliban leadership". Mr Straw's remark is being seen as an obvious attempt to placate Pakistan and respect its insistence that "moderate Taliban" elements should be included in a new administration. But further confusing the contradictions, Mr Straw later told journalists that Pakistan could not be allowed to have overall control of Afghan politics, because past Pakistani dominance had caused trouble.

Indicating that the West was on uncertain ground in the matter of keeping peace in Afghanistan, Mr Straw said that UN blue helmets, a multi-national force, or even non-Taliban Afghan forces could be used to police areas as soon as they are freed from Taliban control.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

24 OCT 2001

Afghan winter, not Ramzan worries U.S.

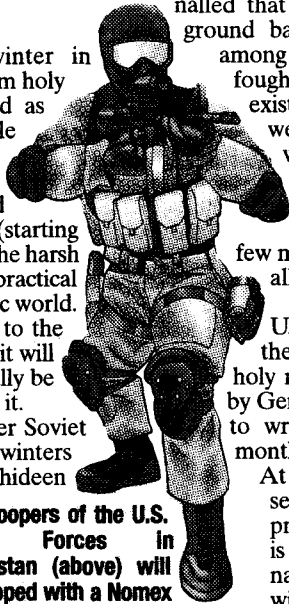
By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: The arrival of winter in Afghanistan and the onset of the Muslim holy month of Ramzan are looming ahead as possible deadlines for the U.S. to topple the Taliban regime and complete the first phase of its war on terrorism.

The Bush administration has indicated that it won't be inhibited by Ramzan (starting November 17) in its war campaign, but the harsh Afghan winter could be a tougher practical proposition than any anger in the Islamic world. U.S. military planners are now looking to the weathermen to get a sense of how long it will be before they face what could potentially be a Vietnam with snow, as one analyst put it.

Accounts from generals of the former Soviet Union who fought nearly ten Afghan winters speak of barefoot and lightly-clad mujahideen trudging cheerfully over the snow to battle an army that was itself familiar with harsh conditions, and routing it in the end. But U.S. commanders too appear to have factored in a winter war judging from the deployment in Uzbekistan of the 10th Mountain Division, an elite Alpine unit famed for its toughness.

The Taliban too has sig-



Delta Troopers of the U.S. Special Forces in Afghanistan (above) will be equipped with a Nomex facemask, gloves and coveralls, an assault vest with Kevlar vest underneath, assault boots, goggles with shatterproof lens, a GPS receiver and gas mask pouches, and an M4 carbine which has a thermal imager and laser-pointing devices.

nalled that it is looking forward with relish to a ground battle. According to one account, even among the various Afghan factions that have fought bitterly since the Soviet eviction, there exists a gentleman's agreement to lay down weapons during winter. But the Taliban, which has the most experienced winter warriors, has repeatedly violated the agreement and surprised other factions to gain ground. If the Taliban last out a few more weeks, there could be the mother of all winter battles.

Ramzan is more of a political problem. U.S. officials on Tuesday made it clear that they would not be deterred by the Muslim holy month, in the process rejecting the plea by Gen Pervez Musharraf that it would be best to wrap up the campaign within the next month for fear of upsetting Muslims.

At a Pentagon briefing on Monday, defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld rejected the proposition, telling reporters that "history is replete with instances where Muslim nations have fought among themselves or with other countries during various important holy days for their religion".

What appears to be holding up the U.S. campaign for now is the lack of clarity about the future political road map for Afghanistan. After initially signalling that it would back the Northern Alliance, Washington has pulled its punches in recent days.

US to get Atal, Pervez talking

S Rajagopalan
Washington, October 23

US (W) from Atal HF-1 24/10

THE US has warned India and Pakistan against allowing tension between them to go "out of control" as the stakes were "too high" in the wake of the two countries supporting the war against terrorism.

"Obviously, there is tension between the two countries. They cannot let it get out of control. Both are coalition members in the fight against terrorism," US Secretary of State Colin Powell said today.

There are indications that Powell might try and get Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and President Pervez Musharraf to start talking again. The Bush administration is trying its best to host a Vajpayee-Musharraf meeting on the sidelines of the UN

35 HARKAT MEN DIE IN KABUL RAID

THIRTY-FIVE militants of the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen were killed on Tuesday night in US air raids on Kabul, BBC Television reported. The militants were holding a meeting at a house in Kabul when a precision-guided missile hit the venue killing all of them, including their leader Ustad Farid.

Most of the militants reportedly hailed from Lahore. They were in Kabul to fight with the Taliban.

The US strikes were based on specific information on the meeting of the Harkat militants. The group was recently listed a terrorist outfit by the US for its links with Osama bin Laden.

PTI, Islamabad

General Assembly session next month in case the Pakistani leader visits New York. Musharraf is still to decide if he will make the trip or leave it to his Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar to represent him at the summit.

Powell has signalled the US's broad approach of "helping" In-

dia and Pakistan to restart dialogue. "They are having a little difficulty getting the dialogue started. I'll help in that regard," Powell said. His remarks came just before Vajpayee spoke of the futility of holding a dialogue with Pakistan as long as it did not end its support to cross-border terror-

ism. Musharraf has since come up with his threat to "teach India a lesson" if it resorted to a hot pursuit of terrorists across LoC.

Though there does not seem to be any meeting ground between the two in the near future, Washington proposes to keep up a subtle pressure on both India and Pakistan. As the UN session is still 20 days away, there is a feeling here that there is still enough time to pull through a symbolic Vajpayee-Musharraf meeting. But any further violent incidents in Kashmir will queer the pitch.

Musharraf's own travel plans will be largely determined by the ground situation in Pakistan in the intervening period. In case of a step-up in the violent demonstrations being organised by pro-Taliban and pro-Osama groups, Musharraf may well opt to stay put in Islamabad.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

24 OCT 2001

40 more die in Kabul, Herat ■ 22 Harkat men killed

US jets hit Taliban frontline positions

AGENCIES

KABUL, Oct. 23. — US planes pounded Taliban frontline positions north of Kabul and near Mazar-e-Sharif today, even as the Northern Alliance said they plan to surround Kabul but not enter it.

Witnesses said US bombs hit Taliban troop concentrations and anti-aircraft positions. Twenty-two Harkat-ul-Mujahideen members were killed when a house where they were meeting was hit by US bombs, the BBC said, adds UNI from Delhi.

A Taliban official said US raids overnight had killed more than 40 people in Kabul and Herat. The UN today said it had learnt that a military hospital had been destroyed in Herat yesterday but it had no information about the casualties, a report from Islamabad adds. The Pentagon said it has received information indicating that US warplanes might have accidentally bombed a home for senior citizens in Herat, a senior defence official said today.

Today, the air strikes targeted Taliban troops protecting Kabul and also Mazar-e-Sharif, which commands a strategic east-west highway and is the key supply link to Kabul, US officials said.

Five explosions were heard north of Kabul this morning, a witness said. US jets blasted oil storage facilities in Kandahar. Planes also targeted an asphalt plant, setting back Taliban efforts to repair the damaged runway at Kandahar airport.

A Taliban rocket slammed into the main bazaar in the Alliance held Charikar town, killing two people, witnesses said.

There was no sign of Northern Alliance forces, now just 12 km north of Kabul, preparing an advance. The Alliance commander, Abdul Rashid Dostum, said his forces were locked in fierce battles with the Taliban near Mazar-e-Sharif.

"Our forces launched an attack yesterday and the fighting has been fierce," he said on satellite phone from his frontline position. "They (the Taliban) left many dead on the battlefield."

The US defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, yesterday said US air strikes were meant to assist Alliance forces. Encouraged by the US, the Alliance said it was eager to move towards Kabul, but wouldn't go in. "We're going to surround Kabul, but not capture it," the Alliance's Washington representative said. **Musharraf for neutral zone:**



A COUNTRY CALLED FAMILY: An Afghan woman with her child begs for alms in the shade of a lorry in Peshawar on Tuesday. — AP/PTI

Gen Pervez Musharraf today said Kabul should be turned into a neutral zone to prevent the Northern Alliance from occupying it after a Taliban collapse.

Pak closes Chaman border: Pakistan today closed the Chaman border crossing to keep out Afghan refugees. In Jacobabad,

police beat up protesters demonstrating against US military presence in Pakistan. Tribal chiefs and leading Afghan leaders will meet in Peshawar tomorrow to discuss the future of a post-Taliban Afghanistan. In Kabul, the Red Cross distributed food rations to the

disabled people's households. **'Al-Qaida camps hit':** Britain today said US strikes had destroyed nine Al Qaida camps and damaged nine airfields and 24 military barracks.

■ More photographs, reports on pages 8 & 10

Powell has reassured India and Pakistan without saying anything new

The sheriff and his posse

CHANDRASHEKHAR DASGUPTA

Playing the role of the global sheriff, Washington has rounded up a vast international posse for its "war against terrorism". The posse includes traditional adversaries such as the Arabs and Israel, as well as India and Pakistan. It is no easy task for the sheriff to hold together such a diverse posse and prevent its members from riding off in different directions or even engaging in a shoot-out between themselves.

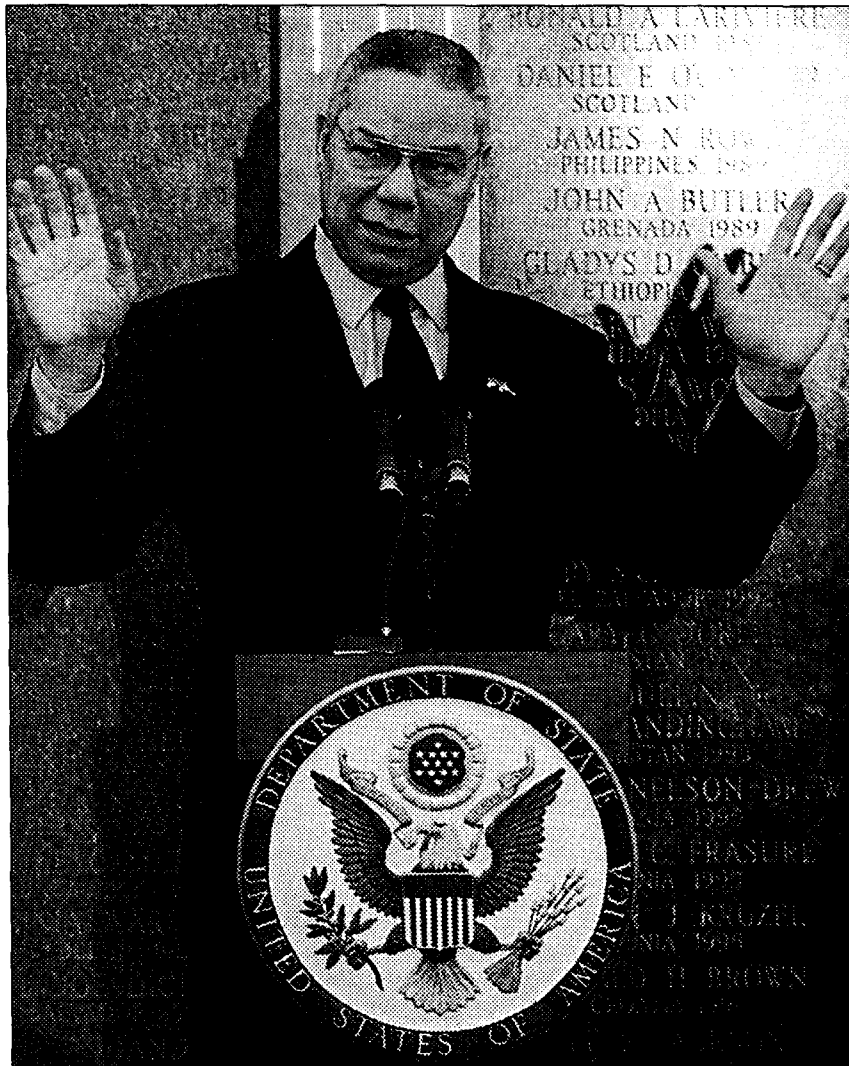
Colin Powell's visit to Pakistan and India was an exercise in holding together the coalition. Among the reasons for their signing up as members of the United States-led posse is the fact that both India and Pakistan hope to secure American support against each other. New Delhi wants the aims of the "war" to cover cross-border terrorism in Kashmir. Islamabad wants the aims confined to Afghanistan; it also hopes to involve the US in seeking a resolution of the Kashmir "dispute" on its terms. India and Pakistan have made conflicting demands on the US sheriff and each is keeping a jealous eye on Washington to make sure that its rival does not secure an advantage.

The end of the Cold War reduced Pakistan to strategic insignificance in a global context. As military and economic aid tapered off, Pakistan steadily descended into economic and political chaos. The new crisis in Afghanistan offers Pakistan at least temporary reprieve. Reverting to its familiar role of a "frontline state", Pakistan has succeeded in obtaining substantial economic benefits as well as a promise of restoration of some military ties with the US. The gains have not come without a price. Pakistan has been obliged to sacrifice its own creation, the taliban, through which it had hoped to establish a client state in Afghanistan. It also had to rein in at least some of the domestic extremist groups that had served as assets in the terrorist campaign in Kashmir.

As a reward for these difficult decisions, Islamabad is pressing Washington to install a new pro-Pakistan regime in Kabul, including as many "liberal" taliban as possible. Pakistan is anxious to minimize the role of the Northern Alliance, believing it to be unduly friendly to India; make it clear that the "war against terrorism" does not extend to Pakistani actions in Kashmir; involve Washington fully in the Kashmir "dispute"; extend the scope of economic assistance and restore military supplies.

New Delhi, to which the US position during the Kargil episode had come as a pleasant surprise, prided itself on the new relationship it was forging with Washington. Partly for this reason and

The author is former ambassador to China and the US



partly because it hoped to extend the scope of the "war against terrorism" to Kashmir, New Delhi was one of the first countries to offer the US military facilities on its soil. The initial euphoria in New Delhi gave way to concern when Pakistan joined the US-led coalition and was duly rewarded as an "indispensable ally".

India's wish list for Washington includes: reassurance that the US remains committed to a long-term strategic relationship with India; reassurance that the "war against terrorism" will extend to Kashmir; an assurance that the new regime in Kabul will not be dominated by pro-Pakistan elements and that its composition will reflect the role played by the Northern Alliance; no renewal of military aid to Pakistan.

Powell's task was to reassure both his South Asian partners and, if possible, lower the level of tension between them. He displayed great diplomatic adroitness in addressing this task. He went through the motions of consulting both

ernment will be undertaken under UN auspices. In Islamabad, Powell pleased his Pakistani audience by his references to Kashmir's "central importance", the question of human rights in Kashmir and the need to take into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people. He also indicated that the US would be prepared to play a role in Kashmir but qualified this by making it subject to a request from both India and Pakistan.

In New Delhi, the secretary of state clarified that his statement on Kashmir had not been reported accurately and that he had only implied that Kashmir was an important issue. He confirmed that the US is concerned about terrorism in Kashmir and condemned the terrorist attack on the legislative assembly in Srinagar.

In Pakistan, Powell held out assurances of further aid and, in India, he reassured his audience about the importance that Washington continues to attach to its ties with New Delhi. In both capitals, Powell called for a resumption of the Indo-Pakistan dialogue. In effect he said nothing new in India or Pakistan but he largely succeeded in reassuring both sides about American intentions.

What conclusions should we draw from the Powell visit? What tactics are best suited for advancing our national interests at the present juncture?

There has recently been some talk in New Delhi about "hot pursuit" operations across the line of control. It is clear from Powell's public statements that the US would disapprove of any military escalation. The secretary of state called on both India and Pakistan to exercise restraint. Washington wants to contain differences between its coalition partners so that they do not flare up into open conflict. Nor can it afford to let down Pakistan, newly restored to the status of an ally, at least at the present stage. If Pakistan continues to send terrorists across the LoC, India should consider options for covert retaliation in order to "bring justice" to the terrorists enjoying sanctuary across the LoC. An essential condition for such operations is that they can be plausibly denied. Great care will have to be exercised since clandestine operations are never easy. On the other hand, they reduce the risks of military escalation and of international opprobrium.

New Delhi should not forget that the future orientation of an Afghan government will depend not only on its previous links with foreign agencies but also on its future sources of economic and military aid. India should insist that all aid to Afghanistan should either be channelled through the United Nations or given directly to Kabul by the donors. History shows that it would be disastrous to use Pakistan as a conduit for money or arms.

Powell managed to give the same words a different spin in Islamabad and New Delhi

countries on the future of Afghanistan, without committing himself to any specific formula beyond the generally accepted principle that the new regime must be "broad-based". Without saying anything new on Kashmir he managed to give his words a different spin in Islamabad and in New Delhi, catering to the requirements of his audience in each capital.

In Pakistan, Powell stated that ex-taliban elements would qualify for inclusion in a future broad-based Kabul regime. India was assured that the Northern Alliance would be duly represented. The task of forming a new gov-

THE TELEGRAPH

24 OCT 2001

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2010
POWELL VISIT

India isn't out of the loop

THE reference in Islamabad by Colin Powell to Kashmir as being central to the relationship between India and Pakistan, while sending alarm bells ringing in New Delhi, must be set against what he told reporters while en route to the subcontinent, that the sanctity of the LoC in Kashmir must be respected. Add to that a statement from Washington that Powell did not advocate a separate Islamic state of Kashmir. Quibbles about Kashmir being "a" central versus "the" central issue are semantics, which depend on which audience Powell is addressing, New Delhi or Islamabad. He takes care to balance statements about Kashmir with statements about terrorism in the state, which doesn't indicate a seismic shift in the manner in which the US views Kashmir. It is necessary to look at the larger picture. Creation of a broad-based government in Afghanistan, which closes down terrorist camps and eschews sponsorship of terror, is bound to create pressure on Pakistan to do the same; Pakistan can hardly hope to remain unchanged by current events. Leftist rhetoric about terrorist attacks being *jehads* launched by the poor against the rich notwithstanding, the growing *jehadi* network can be attributed to the oil boom; for the first time, the US and the international community are working towards cutting terrorism's financial supply lines. This will have powerful effects on militancy in Kashmir; New Delhi needs to bide its time while remaining vigilant. It also needs to remain engaged with the US. Brave talk about "going it alone" aside, realism indicates that India doesn't have the trade and aid clout to apply economic pincers on Pakistan.

The Americans are methodical and like to do one thing at a time. Once the battle in Afghanistan is won, the US is bound to apply pressure on Pakistan to dismantle its *jehadi* complex, not in India's but in its own interests — it will hardly countenance defeated *jehadis* in Afghanistan simply regrouping in Pakistan. Some of the effects of this pressure are already apparent — General Musharraf has been forced to wind up terrorist camps and dispense with the services of the chief of the ISI as well as two senior army chiefs who were close to the *jehadis*. He also condemned the suicide attack on the J and K assembly and called Vajpayee to convey his commiseration — this would have been unthinkable before 11 September. Powell offered a number of sops — a treaty on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, and an invitation to Vajpayee for a "working visit" to Washington. On Indian insistence, the US and the UK have also frozen, although belatedly, the assets of the Jaish-e-Mohammed. Germany's Gerhard Schröder is coming calling soon. There is no need for India to feel left out of the loop.

President Bush's address to APEC went beyond Powell's carefully balanced act.

THE STATESMAN

23 OCT 2001

Anthrax scare rallies home support for Kabul mission

BRONWEN MADDOX
THE TIMES, LONDON

LONDON, Oct. 22. — The discovery on Sunday of the ninth American anthrax case — a postal worker in Washington DC — will do nothing to calm down a jittery country.

There is no point in disparaging people's fear. Whether they should feel it or not, they do. But the fear has been out of all proportion to the threat so far. Some of that reaction is useful to the USA, and some, very definitely, is not.

The anthrax alarm is probably the most useful tool the Bush Administration could have had in keeping up support for a war which could last our lifetimes, Vice-President Mr Dick Cheney said.

But the fear is also dangerous, and not just in bringing national distraction, even paralysis. If the country does use this as a spurious reason to rough up the pharmaceutical companies, rapidly rewriting patent laws and forcing drug giants to work for military ends, it will be shooting itself in the foot, with results more painful than any likely anthrax attack. Whoever sent the packages of spore-

laden powder must be delighted at the pervasive sense of threat they have induced. The House of Representatives is shut; much of Capitol Hill is empty inside a corral of police crime scene tape.

Despite the Americans' alarm, there have been only nine US cases, including one death. This does not make the terrorists, whoever they are, look powerful. The odd little packets which apparently carried the spores, with their squarish, irregular handwriting, are a reminder that, for biological weapons, delivery to a large number of people presents a very real problem.

Maybe the alarm will die down quickly. After September 11, there was a rush to tighten airport security. Yet reports show that standards vary widely across the USA. Think of foot-and-mouth, too, the choice of alarm earlier this summer. American airports were then on high alert, with British visitors asked to step through disinfectant. Those precautions have melted away, though there was another foot-and-mouth case in Britain just three weeks ago.

Even though the actual anthrax infection rate is small, the scare seems to have strengthened the American public's support for a long war, with more military casualties, on top of the two recent deaths in the Pakistan helicopter crash.

But while national stamina may be high, some of the new ideas of how drug companies should deploy their efforts are worrying.

The Canadian Government has said it would override the patent on Cipro, which is thought to be the best anti-anthrax antibiotic, manufactured by the German company Bayer; instead, it would buy a million tablets from another manufacturer. So far, the Bush Administration has resisted calls to follow suit. But pressure is building up for drug companies to make a "moral gesture" in national interest.



A Pakistani displays donations in cash and gold collected from pro-Taliban citizens of Karachi on Monday. — AP/PTI

ISRAEL SHOOT-OUT

JERUSALEM, Oct. 22. — A suspected Palestinian gunman fired on Israelis at a motor licensing bureau in Jerusalem today, wounding at least four people before a soldier shot him, police said. The condition of one of the victims is critical, ambulance service spokesman said. — Reuters

THE STATESMAN

23 OCT 2001

Stop strikes, say Russia, China ■ Pentagon has chem-weapons: Taliban

US bombs kill 100 in Herat hospital

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 22.— More than 100 people, including patients, doctors and nurses, were killed when US planes bombed the second biggest hospital in the western city of Herat today, the Taliban said.

The US defence department said it had no evidence that US planes had bombed the hospital.

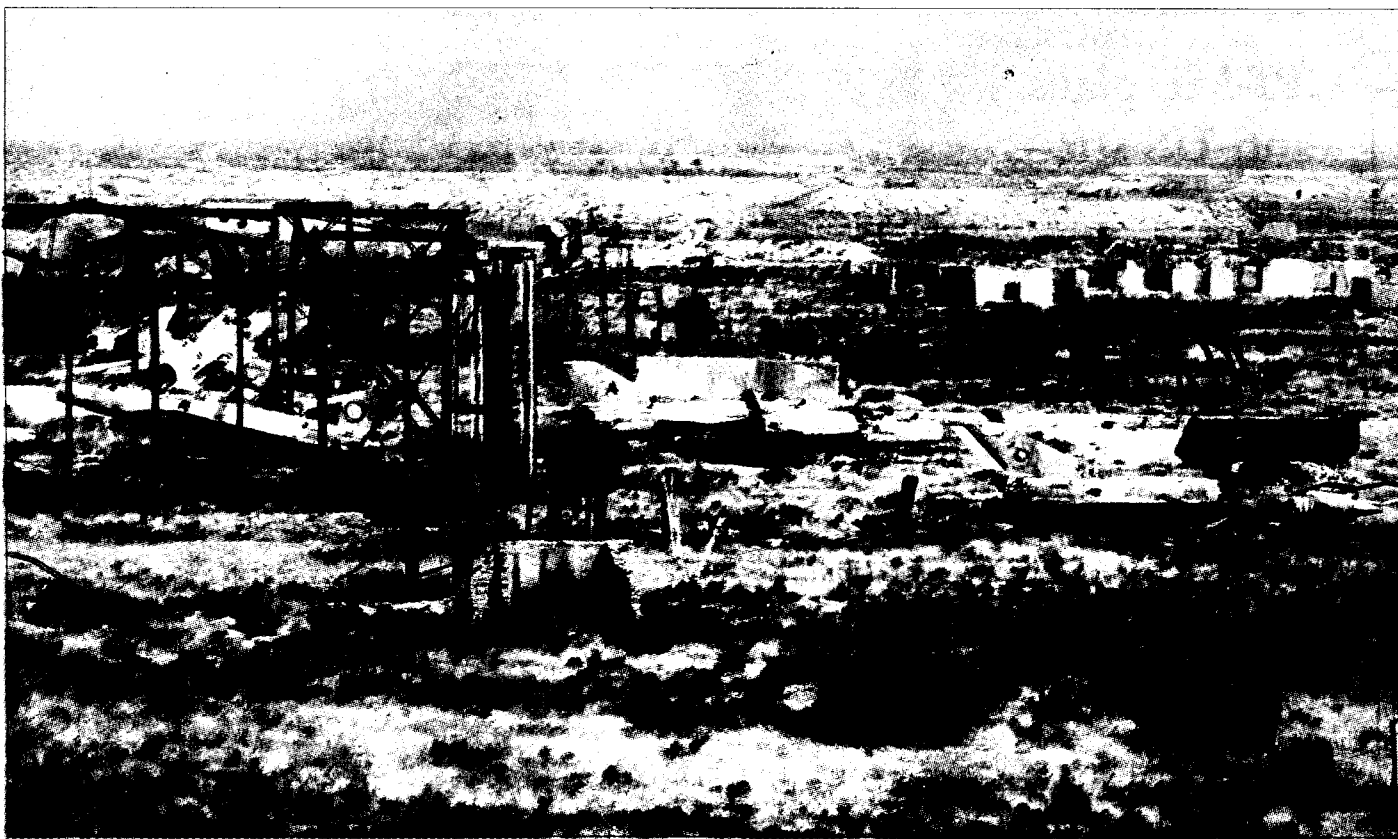
The Taliban ambassador to Pakistan, Mr Abdul Salam Zaeef, told reporters that US and British aircraft also hit two clinics and several shops in Oruzgan province, killing 18 civilians. The victims included patients, doctors, nurses and other hospital staff. He also claimed the militia forces had shot down an US plane in Registan area of Helmand province.

"A 100-bed hospital in Herat was bombed by US and British planes. More than 100 people are reported to have been martyred (killed). They are patients, doctors, nurses and other staff present there," Mr Zaeef said.

"US planes are intentionally targeting Afghans using sophisticated and destructive weapons, which were never used before in any war. Bombs have completely destroyed a village in Nangarhar province. These are civilian sites located far from military places," Mr Zaeef said.

"This is an open terrorist attack committed by the Bush administration to terrorise Afghan people and punish them because they believe in an Islamic system," he said.

The US defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, said there was no evidence that US planes had bombed a hospital in Herat. "We have absolutely no evidence to suggest that the allegation is correct," Mr Rumsfeld said. The Taliban claim that it had shot down US helicopters



Bagram airport in northern Afghanistan on Monday. The airport was the scene of a fierce fighting between the Taliban and Northern Alliance. — AP/PTI

and captured US forces was false, he said. The Pentagon spokeswoman, Ms Victoria Clarke dismissed charges that US forces were using chemical and biological weapons.

'Battle for Mazar-i-Sharif': A senior Northern Alliance commander today said the Alliance was poised to launch an assault on Mazar-i-Sharif, within hours. "We are ready to attack today, maybe in an hour," General Barzalai, a deputy to defence minister General Muhammad Fahim, said. "Today, we want to attack."

The USA, under pressure to achieve a breakthrough before Ramzan, today again attacked

frontline Taliban positions guarding Kabul, a report from Kabul adds.

Witnesses saw two jets circling over the front line between the Taliban positions and the Northern Alliance before one broke away, flew much lower and appeared to fire a missile at Taliban positions at Kali Nasru.

Black smoke billowed into the sky and a second strike followed soon as Taliban forces responded with anti-aircraft fire.

Gen. Pervez Musharraf today said extending the strikes into Ramzan would have a negative effect on Muslims. "One hopes this campaign will end before

the month of Ramzan. otherwise it will have a negative effect on Muslims," he said.

Mr Vladimir Putin and Mr Jiang Zemin, have called for immediate end to military operations in Afghanistan and beginning of a political settlement there, adds SNS from Delhi.

Mr Putin's stand "does not mean Russia has changed its stance" on the problem of fighting international terrorism, Novosti said, quoting a Russian diplomat.

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■ More reports on page 9

ANTHRAX DEATHS?

WASHINGTON, Oct. 22. — Two postal employees, suspected to have contracted anthrax, have died, the Washington health director said today. Mr Ivan Walks said: "In addition to the two confirmed anthrax cases, two postal workers of Brentwood mail facility have expired". But neither of the two fatalities were confirmed as cases of anthrax. "Our index of suspicion is high" that the deaths are anthrax related. — AFP

THE STATESMAN

23 OCT 2001

WAR MOVES NORTH



FLYING CARPET: Northern Alliance soldiers rest near a village. (Reuters)

Washington, Oct. 21: With command snooping in the backyard, the Taliban leadership in the US today opened another front in its war against terror by bombing the northern front.

Today's air raids appeared to have been targeted at the Taliban front lines north of Kabul, where troops were massed to hold off attacks by the opposition Northern Alliance.

The alliance, only 35 miles from Kabul, has been awaiting US air strikes to start their advance towards Kabul. So far, US warplanes have not done so in deference to America's ally Pakistan's opposition to allowing the mainly non-Pashtoon Northern Alliance to march on Kabul.

An alliance commander said the opposition was preparing for a full assault on the northern town of Mazar-e-Sharif.

As the noose tightened around Taliban's neck with the US racing against the mid-November deadline of Ramadan, the militia decided to hand out more rocket launchers, heavy machine guns and anti-aircraft guns to its fighters.

The decision was made to mobilise and equip people in all districts, villages and provinces against the commando attack of America. Taliban education minister Mullah Amir Khan Muttaqi said. The move followed the first US ground strike by Special Forces troops, a raid America claimed as an intelligence coup.

The daring airborne commando raid in Kandahar attacked a military airfield and a headquarters compound of Mullah Mohammad Omar, the Taliban's leader.

Meeting light resistance, the pre-dawn assault was conducted in at least two locations about 60 miles apart by over 100 army Ranger paratroopers and other helicopter-borne special forces troops. Military officials suggested that covert action was still under

way. Other missions could be launched, spurred by intelligence gathered from Friday night's raid or in anticipation of movement on other responses by the Taliban and al Qaida.

"We did not expect to find significant Taliban leadership at these locations," Richard B. Myers, joint chiefs of staff, said, claiming that the commando action "accomplished our objectives." Later, speaking on TV, Myers said US forces would take Osama bin Laden alive, if possible, but "bullet will fly", if necessary.

Military officials said the mission had two objectives. First, helicopters from the Kitty Hawk whistled Special Operations forces to Mullah Omar's compound. Commandos seized papers and other intelligence information.

About 60 miles to the southwest, the Rangers loaded aboard transport planes in nearby Oman and parachuted into the second main target, a remote airfield.

Officers said seizing the airpot gave the military a good look at the runway and facilities for future operations. It also enabled the military to secure the airfield in case the operation at Mullah Omar's compound ran into trouble, and reinforcements or medical supplies needed to be rushed in.

Most of all, it showed the Taliban and al Qaida that the US military could land and carry out operations on the ground. The Rangers left behind a calling card 8-1/2-by-11-inch sheets that said "Freedom endures", with a picture of firemen raising the US flag at the World Trade Center.

The Taliban said the wreckage of the "shotdown" US helicopter and blood stains had been found near Kandahar. The US has said the helicopter crashed in Pakistan. The Rangers who died in the crash have been identified as John Edmunds, 20, and Kristofer Stonesifer, 28.

NYT NEWS SERVICE & REUTERS

Fury blows up on Coke in India

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Hyderabad, Oct. 21: Al Qaida's threat to hit American interests anywhere in the world struck a chord among Andhra's Naxalites who attacked a bottling plant of Coca-Cola early this morning.

The boiler plant, parking area and administrative building at Atmakuru, near Vijayawada, were bombed by the intruders. They left behind a handwritten note in Telugu, warning of more such attacks in protest against the strike at Afghanistan. In the note, the People's War Group claimed responsibility for the bombings.

Around a dozen PWG activists attacked the plant, close to the headquarters of a state special police battalion, escaping into the dark of the night after trying unsuccessfully to destroy the production unit. The bottling plant was heavily damaged, nonetheless. No one was injured as only an electrician was present on the premises at the time.

A police officer disclosed that the note said the attack was "against American military action in Afghanistan".

Dressed in olive green fatigues, the Naxalites threatened the security staff at knife-point, tied them up and locked them in a guard's room a short distance away from the plant.

They planted landmines before triggering the blast. One of the mines did not explode. The electrician cut the power supply in the production unit, which saved it from being blown up.

NEW RESPECT FOR US RESOLVE

Two important developments be noted

TWO important developments ought to compel a change in the world's assessment of American resolve to go to any lengths necessary to eradicate terrorism from the base it has acquired in Afghanistan and from the world. American policy has not yet arrived where common sense and hard experience should lead it but it would be churlish not to recognise that the learning process is on. One is President Bush's clear enunciation of American objectives at the plenary meeting of the APEC conference in Shanghai and let it be noted that he travelled all the way there only to stress it. Earlier Colin Powell, easily the best-endowed man in the American Administration had gone a little over the top in ensuring that Pakistan remained in the loop of the anti-terrorist campaign led by the United States. As the only Muslim nation to do so, the Pakistani dictator had a certain symbolic value. Powell had appeared to go along with Musharraf's unstateable proposition that there are the good Taliban and the bad Taliban; Musharraf's purpose is to strain every nerve to retain some influence over the post-Taliban scenario in Kabul. Bush bluntly rubbed out the artificial distinction that Musharraf enunciated and Powell seemed to endorse. Bush said quite clearly that the Taliban must go lock, stock and barrel. He accused the regime of blocking food supplies to their own people and standing aside while they starved, of cruelty and oppression of their citizens and said there was no room in the civilised world for such a regime. Musharraf's good guys just do not exist, that was the categorical implication. It needed to be said and it needs to be welcomed.

The other change in the situation is the landing of American troops inside Afghanistan. The special forces are not there for the good of their health and it is now possible to suggest that American resolve is stronger than it has ever been and this too is all to the good. America has finally come of age. Details of their mission have not been given and this is entirely understandable. The Taliban are not to be underestimated. There have been no desertions from their ranks, this newspaper has never thought this was a real possibility. It represents two distinct trends of thought. One, it is a recognition of the limits of aerial bombardment and two, it is a signal to the world that America has what it takes to stay the course and fight back as opposed to getting others to fight the battles for them. There will be other sorties with special forces and in time they will join forces with the Northern Alliance and Musharraf's dream of sweet-talking the Americans into accepting some form of Taliban presence in the new government is no longer within the bounds of possibility. This does not mean that there is another quick solution. There will be no easy answers in this conflict between bigotry, intolerance and closed minds and what President Bush describes as the civilised world.

Two American airmen have died in what is described as an accident with a helicopter. That the aircraft came down in Pakistani territory is no proof that it was an accident. It could have been brought down by Taliban fire or fire by sympathisers of the Taliban who are not restricted to the land mass of Afghanistan. Be that as it may, on current evidence it ought not to affect American resolve. There may well be a new respect for the United States as this phase of the fighting develops.

THE STATESMAN

'\$1 billion for CIA's most lethal covert action' Bush okayed mission to eliminate Osama: *Post*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, Oct. 21. - President George W Bush has directed the Central Intelligence Agency to eliminate Osama bin Laden and destroy the Al-Qaida network.

The President signed the intelligence order last month directing CIA to undertake the "most sweeping and lethal covert action" for the missions, the *Washington Post* quoted US officials as saying. The report added Mr Bush has allotted over \$ 1 billion to the CIA's war on terrorism, most of it for the new covert action. The CIA and the US armed forces are collaborating at "an unprecedented" level to carry out the order, the daily said in a banner-headline.

Meanwhile, the US Vice President, Mr Dick Cheney, said in an interview to the *Post* that the new war on terrorism is "is different than the Gulf War in the sense that it may never end. At least not in our lifetime."

In Islamabad, the Taliban claimed that about 1,000 civilians were killed in the American airstrikes in Afghanistan. It today condemned the US President's instructions to the CIA to kill Osama bin Laden, saying it was nothing but an "act of terrorism".

"It is an act of terrorism to issue death orders for a person, against whom they have failed to produce any evidence," the Taliban deputy ambassador to Pakistan, Mr Suhail Shaheen said.

USA's Intelligence agencies have identified important and specific weaknesses in bin La-



An Afghan girl stands in the room her family has rented in Hazar Town near Quetta on Sunday. Her family had been living in a cave after the Taliban burnt their home and they fled to Pakistan after the strikes. - AP/PTI

den's organisation that are not publicly known. These vulnerabilities will be the focus of the covert action, the officials said. The President's order instructs the CIA to attack bin Laden's communications, security apparatus and infrastructure. "The gloves are off," one senior official told the daily. "The President has given

the agency the green light to do whatever is necessary. Lethal operations that were unthinkable before 11 September are now underway."

In issuing the orders targeting Osama, Mr Bush has clarified that he wants CIA to undertake high-risk operations, the report said. He told his advisers, he is willing to risk failure in the pursuit of the ultimate victory, even if there are some embarrassing public setbacks in individual operations, the officials were quoted in the report. The overall military and covert plan is intended to be a massive and decisive one, they added.

The report mentioned, in the last spring, US agencies obtained high quality video of Osama, with his beard and white robes, surrounded by a large entourage, at one of his known locations in Afghanistan. But neither the CIA nor the military had the means to eliminate him while being photographed. Since then, the CIA-operated 'Predator,' the unmanned reconnaissance aircraft with high-resolution cameras, has been equipped with the Hellfire anti-tank missile to fire at targets of opportunity.

Everyday, a CIA document called the 'Threat Matrix' lands at the desks of the the Bush Administration's top national security officials.

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THE STATESMAN

22 OCT 2001

Bodybag blow to America

Chopper crash kills 2 US soldiers • Special Forces and Taliban troops exchange fire



Members of the deck force of USS Theodore Roosevelt wait to recover an aircraft on Saturday.

HT Correspondent/Agencies
Washington/Kabul, October 20

US COMMANDOS fought Taliban troops for several hours this morning in south Afghanistan, opening a new phase of the war after about two weeks of aerial bombardment. The commandos had also targeted Taliban chief Omar's compound, it was learnt.

The commandos were back and safe in their camps, a US official said. The official would not give his name or details except saying the raids had been carried out overnight.

The Taliban said their forces had engaged US commandos near Kandahar and beat them off. The Taliban information agency said the US had heli-dropped commandos on Baba Sahib, a mountain close to Kandahar, around 11 pm yesterday. "Our forces went to the area and the US troops were forced to leave a short while after they landed," the agency said.

The US suffered its first casualty last night when a military helicopter crashed in Pakistan's Baluchistan province, killing two soldiers. The Taliban claimed they had shot down the chopper.

In Sanghai, President Bush said the US soldiers had died in a cause "that is just and right, and we will prevail."

All this while, US bombers kept hitting targets in Kabul, Kandahar and the western city of Herat. At least 29 people, all of them civilians, had died in these attacks, the Taliban said.

US officials confirmed yesterday.

ESCAPE ON TALIBAN ONSET

At the summit in the Belgian city of Ghent stopped short of endorsing a call for the withdrawal of the Taliban. Leaders of the 16-member coalition said they would themselves to "bring about the elimination of the Taliban network". Tony Blair, British Prime Minister, said he held a secret meeting with US officials 45 minutes ahead of the summit, which upset the other 14 leaders. Most upset were Osama bin Laden and Belgian leaders. Belgium is currently the rotating EU head.

Detailed report on Page 9

day that special forces were in northern and southern Afghanistan, searching for Taliban targets and Osama bin Laden.

In the north, the opposition massed hundreds of additional fighters on the frontline off Kabul, saying the militia would soon be ousted from the city. Some 400 men from Parwan and Kapisa provinces gathered on a hill overlooking the Jabal Seraj opposition base near the mouth of the Panjshir valley, an AFP reporter on the scene said.

General Abdul Rashid Dostam, a key military leader of the anti-Taliban opposition, spoke by telephone to Turkish TV, scotching reports that he had been killed.

Earlier, Qatar's al-Jazeera channel had quoted Taliban sources to report that Dostam had died some days ago.

The use of US land troops today marked a switch to a broader range of overt and covert military activities. President George Bush, in Shanghai for the Apec summit, refused to confirm the presence of US troops in Afghanistan, but said: "Let me reiterate what I've told the American people and the world. We will use whatever means are necessary to achieve our objective."

A Pakistan Army official said yesterday that US officials had informed his Government that Special Forces would conduct "hit-and-run" operations in Taliban-ruled areas of Afghanistan to flush out Laden and Taliban leaders. An unspecified number of US Special Forces personnel had been dropped in south Afghanistan on Thursday. Pakistan was aware that US forces had been in north Afghanistan for over a week, the official added.

"Kitty Hawk", the US aircraft carrier stationed in the Indian Ocean, was loaded with Special Forces last weekend and AC-130 gunships began attacking south Afghanistan.

Special operations troops like the Green Berets perform several missions, including assistance to opposition forces and intelligence gathering.

Special forces in south Afghanistan were supporting the CIA's effort to encourage ethnic Pashtun leaders to break away from the Taliban militia, a US official said yesterday.

Six powerful blasts rocked Kabul today as US planes resumed bombing of the city.

Bomb blast at Islamabad airport

Mubashir Zaidi
Islamabad, October 20

THE AIRPORT Security Force at the Islamabad International Airport found an unclaimed bag containing an explosive device today. The bomb exploded before the disposal squad could arrive. Security was promptly tightened in the city after the blast.

On finding the bag containing a tape recorder in which the bomb was placed, the security forces alerted the bomb disposal squad and put the bag under the bomb blanket in a deserted corner of the parking lot.

But before the disposal squad could reach the airport, the device exploded. No one, however, was injured in the blast.

The police are searching for a middle-aged bearded man who was seen holding the bag by one of the police personnel on duty at the airport. It is suspected that the device could have been placed only to caution the Pervez Musharraf Government against its support to US military strikes in Afghanistan.

A police officer said had the bomb exploded in front of the departure lounge where it was originally planted, some lives would certainly have been lost.

More reports on Pages 9, 10, 11

FIRST AMERICAN CASUALTIES AS HELICOPTER CRASHES

U.S. commandos conduct lightning raids in Afghanistan

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 20. The Bush administration has formally opened a new front in Afghanistan with U.S. elite commandos and Army Rangers staging a lightning raid deep inside southern Afghanistan to attack a specific Taliban target.

Separately, but related to the war efforts, two American service personnel were killed in Pakistan in a helicopter crash. This is the first combat-related casualty for the U.S. and its allies. Meanwhile, an AFP report said anthrax spores had been found at the U.S. House of Representatives.

Defence officials here are not saying much about the raid: As many as 100 commandos were involved in the raid early on Saturday, the first of its kind in a formal sense in Operation Enduring Freedom. The helidropped-commandos were drawn from the Army Rangers, the Delta Force and Green Berets. The target was the political and military stronghold of the Taliban in Kandahar — it was aimed at rooting out members of the Al-Qaeda terrorist network as well.

Pentagon officials say the commando raid is only the first of the kind; and for operational reasons they are not willing to go into the details. The ground phase of the war will not be "conventional" in the traditional sense; rather, it will be an operation by small teams of special forces backed by tremendous air power, including attack helicopters.

The start of the special forces operations does not mean that



TO THE WARFRONT: Reservists of Afghanistan's Northern Alliance march in Jabal Seraj; 50 km north of Kabul, on Saturday. Some 500 reservists from the northern Parwan province have been called up by the anti-Taliban Alliance. — AFP

there will be any let-up from the skies. In fact, the air strikes will be heavier to back the commando operations on the ground. Further, the U.S. is keen on softening the ground more for the Northern Alliance to make further inroads into the Taliban stronghold.

The Pentagon is not directly responding to the Taliban claims of

having "forced" the U.S. troops to withdraw. Rather, the military planners are saying that this is what commando actions are all about — going after a specific target and getting out.

Likewise, the Defence Department is not willing to subscribe to the Taliban claim that its ground fire brought down a helicopter re-

sulting in two deaths. Officials here insist that the crash was an accident in Pakistan and involved members belonging to an "on call assistance force".

The lightning raid by the elite commandos is only one dimension of what is taking place on the ground. American service personnel are in Northern Afghanistan

liaising with the opposition warlord, Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum. The activities are taking place around the vital town of Mazar-i-Sharief. The Taliban is trying to entice the Northern Alliance to join in a front against the U.S., but the entreaties have been rejected.

Alliance forces move on

An AP report from Jabal Saraj in Afghanistan quoted the Northern Alliance as saying it was closing in on Mazar-i-Sharief despite Taliban claims that it would be able to defend it. However, an Alliance spokesman in Uzbekistan said on Saturday that opposition forces had suffered a setback and were pushed back about 2 km.

Mr. Nasir Ahmad Khan, a Northern Alliance colonel, told about 400 kalashnikov-toting fighters that it was just a matter of time before the Taliban fell. He spoke a few hundred metres away from 14 Northern Alliance tanks, the rugged mountains of the opposition-controlled Panjshir Valley in the background.

"The enemy is trembling before you!" the anti-Taliban commander told the fighters gathered outside this opposition-held town on Saturday. "We're going to capture all of Afghanistan! God is great!" the fighters cried.

Meanwhile, pilots flying over Afghanistan today concentrated on military targets in rural areas, seeking out Taliban troops and tanks, the Air Commander on the USS Theodore Roosevelt said.

The crew launched fighter, ground attack and surveillance aircraft early today for another round of attacks against Taliban troops and Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda.

Dostum speaks on TV

An AFP report from Istanbul said Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum, the key military leader of Afghanistan's anti-Taliban opposition, spoke by telephone to Turkish television today to disprove a report that he had been killed.

Qatar's Al-Jazeera television channel had reported earlier that Gen. Dostum died some days ago, quoting Taliban military sources. Gen. Dostum, an Uzbek commander, spoke by satellite telephone to the CNN-Turk channel in an interview recorded today morning, denying the rumours he said had been spread by Taliban propaganda. The general also denied he had had any contacts with U.S. officers.

'We'll pursue terrorists from place to place'

By Amit Baruah

SHANGHAI, OCT. 20. The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, today described the September 11 terrorist attacks on his country as an "attack on all civilised countries" by giving statistics and nationalities of those killed in New York — 96 Russians, 23 Australians, at least 30 Chinese, 24 Japanese, 20 Malaysians, 16 Mexicans and 21 Indonesians.

Using strong language in an address to the APEC CEOs' summit, Mr. Bush's speech was dominated by the issue of terrorism, only to the end did he make a reference to free trade and the need for launching a new round of WTO negotiations. "This conflict is a fight to save the civilised world, and values common to the West, to Asia, to Islam...by their cruelty, the terrorists have chosen to live on the hunted margin of mankind," Mr. Bush said.

"The most visible part of our response is taking place in Afghanistan. The Taliban regime has allied itself with murderers. I gave

Taliban leaders a choice: turn over the terrorists, or face your ruin. They chose unwisely," he said.

Saying that the U.S. stood for friendship with the Afghan people, Mr. Bush maintained: "My Government supports international efforts to bring help and stability and peace to that unfortunate nation".

He blamed the Taliban for problems in the delivery of food and medicine in Afghanistan. "I share that frustration. The guilty ones are the Taliban. They disrupt; they steal; they prevent supplies of food from delivery. They starve their people, and that is another reason they must go.

"Tomorrow, APEC leaders will pledge to work together to deny the terrorists any sanctuary, any funding, any material or moral support. Together, we will, patiently and diligently, pursue the terrorists from place to place until justice is done," he said.

He said the war on terror had many fronts and military action is only a part of our plan. "The cam-

paign will take strong diplomacy and intelligence; diligent law enforcement and financial cooperation. It will span every continent and require varied contribution from many nations."

"The stakes in this fight were high for all nations — our lives, our way of lives and our economic future. By attacking two great economic symbols, the terrorists tried to shatter confidence in the world economic system. But they failed. The terrorists hoped that world markets would collapse. But markets have proven their resilience and fundamental strength. And this week in these halls, we return to the steady work of building the market-based economic system that has brought more prosperity more quickly to more people than at any time in human history.

"I'm here in Shanghai to assure our friends — and to inform our foes — that the progress of trade and freedom will continue. The ties of culture and commerce will grow stronger. Economic development will grow broader," he said.

"The Asia-Pacific region provides the world with a model of choice: choose openness, trade, and tolerance, and you will find prosperity, liberty and knowledge. Choose isolation, envy and resentment, and you will find poverty, stagnation and ignorance. Our nations have chosen — we have chosen freedom over fear," he said.

"Out of the sorrow of September 11th, I see opportunity — a chance for nations and their leaders to strengthen and to rethink and reinvigorate our relationships. We share more than a common enemy, we share a common goal: to expand our ties of trade and trust. And now we must seize the opportunity," the President maintained.

Stating that trade was the engine of economic development, Mr. Bush said APEC's Bogor goals of free trade by the year 2020 must be met. Supporting a new round of trade negotiations, Mr. Bush said there was much work to be done to make the upcoming WTO Ministerial Meeting a success.

THE HINDU

21 OCT 2001

First US casualty in copter crash

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD/WASHINGTON, Oct. 20. — The US suffered its first casualty in the Afghan war last night when one of its military copters crashed in Pakistan's Baluchistan province, killing two US personnel.

"Two US military personnel were killed today in Pakistan as a result of a helicopter accident while supporting Operation Enduring Freedom," the Pentagon said.

US officials would not, however, say whether the accident occurred in conjunction with the ground operation in Afghanistan.

Besides the two dead, an "undetermined number" of military personnel were injured in the crash, a US defence official said.

A Pakistani official said the copter came down near the southwestern airbase of Dalbandin.

The Taliban, however, claimed its forces had shot down the chopper. "I



An Afghan carries a bag of flour donated by UN in Kabul. — AP/PTI

have received indications from our officials that our soldiers had hit the Amer-

I'M ALIVE, SAYS DOSTUM

ISTANBUL/ISLAMABAD, Oct. 20. — Qatar's *Al-Jazeera* TV said this morning that General Abdul Rashid Dostum, a key anti-Taliban commander, had died a few days ago. But, moments later, the Uzbek warlord spoke to *CNN-Turk* channel over the phone to prove the news wrong. The Northern Alliance commander said the news was a Taliban propaganda. "Things are going well for us on the front, whereas the Taliban are trying to demoralise our troops.

Defection: A Northern Alliance commander said 120 Taliban fighters have joined General Dostum's forces.
— Agencies

ican helicopter," the militia's deputy ambassador in Islamabad, Suhail Shaheen, said here. A US official has rejected the claim. He also denied that the copter had entered Afghanistan.

THE STATESMAN

2 1 OCT 2001

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2001

THE UNSPOKEN TRAGEDY ^{WJ} ^W 10-10

THE U.S. PRESIDENT, Mr. George W. Bush, has frequently spoken about his country's resolve to do what it takes to win the ongoing military offensive against an identified axis of terror that links Afghanistan's uncivilised Taliban regime and Osama bin Laden, prime suspect behind last month's devastating terrorist strikes against America. But the plight of innocent Afghan civilians reflects a largely unspoken tragedy of this war, which the U.S. launched earlier this month by carrying out aerial and missile strikes against what it saw as a network of military and terrorist infrastructure facilities inside Afghanistan. The United Nations, which might be expected to play the lead role in a latter-day reconstruction of that hapless country, has already lost several aid workers. They were killed during the initial phase of America's raids. More recently, the fire-bombing of a Red Cross warehouse, which contained humanitarian relief supplies, has brought nothing but anguish to the civilised world. The Taliban officials have also taken some international reporters round several sites of civilian homes that seemed to have been destroyed in the U.S. military attack. From America's own perspective, its tendency to quibble over the actual causes of such civilian deaths and other collateral damage is not much of a face-saver. Surely in this context, Washington has tried to underline the objectives of this "anti-terror" war in some political terminology of absolute idealism. However, the larger international community has already begun to visualise the likely humanitarian burdens and economic costs of this war as also its potential fallout in a vast geopolitical context.

Indeed, the U.S. is increasingly coming under much international scrutiny, if not also commensurate pressure at this stage, for what is being perceived as another manifestation of a cavalier conduct which America has historically come to be associated with. In prime focus is Washington's penchant for an awesome high-tech war

against an intransigent regime and its terrorist allies in an utterly impoverished country. The massive picture of a disproportionate use of deadly firepower is not at all mitigated by America's own fanfare about its token air-drops of food supplies and medicines. These humanitarian sorties are said to be designed to enliven the spirits of the ordinary Afghans who have known nothing but misery since the Taliban began exercising control over their lives in 1996. However, America's argument about the benevolence implicit in its pie-from-the-sky mission is simply lost in the din and bustle of the roaring U.S. military machine. Moreover, it is anybody's guess whether the inhuman Taliban has allowed the ordinary Afghans to benefit from America's symbolic gesture of limited humanitarian relief which is but a sop to soothe their frustrations.

If the looming humanitarian catastrophe has not blown up in the face of the global community at this moment, the reasons vary. At one end, there is the assortment of economic and other disabilities that prevent the many affected Afghans from leaving the theatre of war. At the other end of the spectrum, the United Nations does not yet appear to have coordinated its policies with those of the U.S. in a bid to provide the victims of the intensifying war with an escape route through a reasonably safe corridor or the like. It is in this overall humanitarian context that China, which is currently playing host to Mr. Bush at a regional meeting, has pointedly asked him to avoid civilian casualties and target only the terrorists. India, too, should take the initiative to galvanise international action on such humanitarian issues. On a different but related plane, issues of morality may come into play in the emerging international debate about the political space that could be assigned to the "moderate" elements of a notoriously cruel Taliban in a future Afghan Government.

10-10-01

10-10-01

US nuclear power plant receives threat

Harrisburg (Philadelphia),
October 18

19/10
WSW XG-11

THE THREE Mile Island nuclear power plant received a "credible threat" on Wednesday, prompting officials to shut down two nearby airports and dispatch military aircraft to protect the facility.

The plant was placed on a high state of alert as the FBI, state police and military planes scrambled to protect the facility. Nuclear Regulatory Commission spokeswoman Diane Screnci declined to discuss the type of threat, or how the agency received it.

The commission told Three Mile Island about the threat between 6 pm and 7 pm, and the airports were shut down about 9 pm, she said.

Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Laura Brown said a "temporary flight restriction" extended to a 20-mile radius around the Harrisburg airport after the threat.

Three Mile Island is located just outside Harrisburg, which is 35 miles northwest of Lancaster. Ralph DeSantis, a spokesman for Three Mile Island, confirmed the plant's high state of alert, but also declined to discuss the type of threat or the additional security measures. Three Mile Island is reportedly the only nuclear power plant threatened.

Since the September 11 terrorist attacks, the power plant had already taken additional security measures, but Wednesday's alert tightened security further, DeSantis and Screnci said.

AP

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

19 OCT 2001

Anthrax scare grips world

Washington, October 18

THE ANTHRAX scare today broke out of its Florida cradle like a tidal bore, sweeping all five continents, shutting down Parliaments, crippling businesses, frightening postal workers and forcing frenzied stockpiling of antibiotics and vaccines in drugstores all over the world.

Pranksters had a field day and Governments fidgeted on the edge of their seats as a paranoid FBI announced a \$ 1 million reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those sending mail laced with the deadly germ.

The Kenyan Government confirmed the first positive case outside America. Four members of a family became the first confirmed victims after they were exposed through a letter posted in the US, Kenyan Health Minister Sam Ogeri said.

The letter was posted on September 8, three days before the jetliner attacks on New York and Washington.

China reported two suspect letters, one of them addressed to an employee of a US firm.

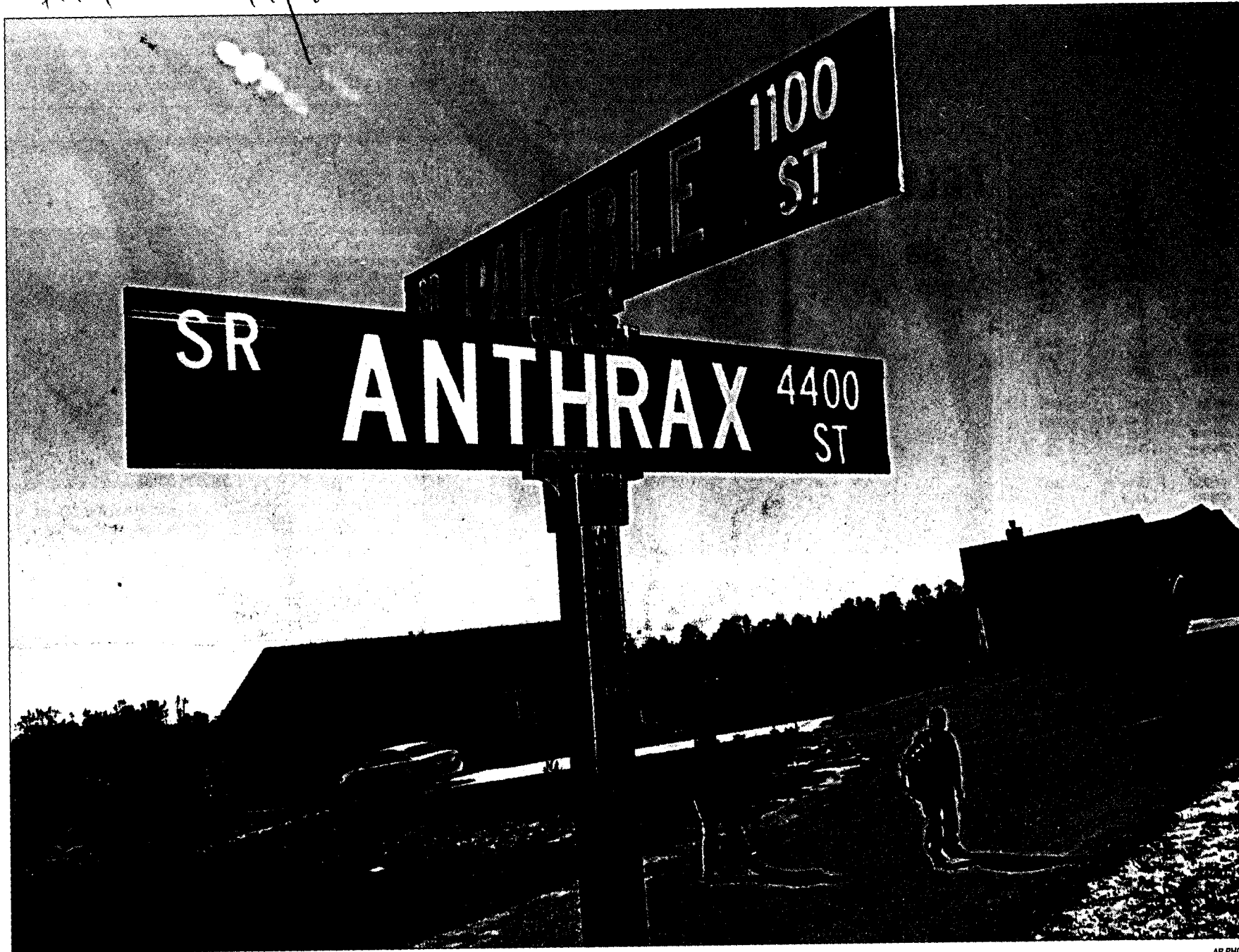
The substance under suspicion in one of the envelopes was enclosed inside a book about the banned Falungong spiritual sect.

In London, *A Sharq al-Awsat*, an internationally circulated Arabic daily owned by a Saudi prince, received two envelopes containing white powder, which the authorities felt could be anthrax spores. One envelope was sent from New York, the other from Leeds.

The office of the editor's secretaries, which had received the envelopes, was evacuated for an indefinite period.

In India, the Indira Gandhi Centre Atomic Research in Kalpakam received two letters containing a white, powdery substance. The first letter was addressed to the Air Officer Commanding in Tamnaram near Chennai. In Kerala a man received a similar letter from Malaysia.

Up north, in Delhi, there was panic over four cases in less than 24 hours. The Indian Statistical Institute received a letter from Singapore, which was promptly sealed and rushed across to the



Some of the seven families living on Anthrax Street, which got its name in 1996, want to rechristen this street in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

CFSL for examination. The second case was reported from Nizamuddin where a man received a suspicious letter, again from Singapore. A senior gynaecologist of Apollo Hospital received a suspicious envelope with several addresses written and then scratched out. One of

the names was that of President George Bush. The fourth letter was for Unicef chief education officer Suzanne Allmar.

In Kota, students of the Government engineering College evacuated their rooms after the college clerk received a soft-padded letter from Australia.

The panic reached English-bazar in distant north Bengal, when a housewife received mail containing a white powdery substance. She promptly burnt the envelope. The administration sent the ashes to Kolkata for forensic tests.

Late night reports said a parcel

from England to Goghat in Arambag, Hooghly, was lying unopened at the post office, with mail room staffers refusing to open it.

In the US, investigators have linked the anthrax episodes in Florida, New York and Washington and are pursuing "substantive leads" in the investigation

into who had sent the deadly bacteria to the three cities. Preliminary tests showed the anthrax mailed to NBC headquarters in Manhattan and a tabloid office in Boca Raton, Florida, were of the same strain.

Related reports: Pages 5, 7 & 10

Jets pound targets at Kabul heart

Kabul, October 18

AN ENTIRE Afghan family was killed when a US fighter plane bombed the truck in which they were moving their possessions out of the eastern city of Jalalabad yesterday, a Taliban official said today.

The incident was the second of its kind reported by the Taliban in 24 hours. Another family had been killed when the truck in which they were fleeing the southern city of Kandahar was bombed.

"I don't know precisely how many people were on the truck but it was reported to me that the whole family has been martyred," Taliban Education Minister Amir Khan Mutaqqi said.

He said at least 40 civilians had been killed and over 80 injured in overnight raids on Kabul, Kandahar and Jalalabad.

In California, US President George Bush said the air strikes were "paving the way for friendly troops on the ground".

Kabul was pounded today in fresh attacks. A huge fire blazed near the Kabul airport. The air strikes began at 3.30 pm (IST) and US jets carried out a series of sorties. Taliban forces responded with anti-aircraft firing.

The forces, once again, seemed to target Taliban frontlines on the hills surrounding Kabul.

Reports said the jets targeted the heart of Kabul today pounding Shash Tarak district near the long-abandoned American embassy.

The district housed a Taliban tank unit, the defence ministry and a Taliban garrison.

Explosions rocked the central neighbourhood around the presidential palace and elsewhere. Opposition forces are fighting hard for a strategic Taliban-held city.

Agencies

USA pounds Kabul; NY Governor, Cong in anthrax scare

AGENCIES

571 19/10
KABUL, Oct. 18. — US jets targeted the heart of Kabul today, pounding a district that housed a Taliban tank unit and other military installations, even as the Northern Alliance was reported to be fighting hard to capture Mazar-e-Sharif, a strategic Taliban-held city in the North.

The militia said the toll in the two weeks' of strikes had reached 400. Witnesses said about 70 people died in Kabul in the past 24 hours.

A Taliban minister claimed Osama bin Laden and top militia leaders were safe.

In Washington, defence officials said US special forces aboard the USS Kitty Hawk, anchored in the Indian Ocean, were ready for any search-and-destroy missions against Osama bin Laden and the Taliban.

Today's strikes started before dawn. Taliban information ministry officials said the planes hit around Kabul's Shash Tarak district, near the abandoned US embassy and home to a Taliban tank unit. The defence ministry and a Taliban garrison too are in the area.

Explosions were also heard around the presidential palace. Flames rose from the airport area too, but the reason couldn't be ascertained. Yesterday, US planes had struck a fuel depot near the airport.

In Kandahar, the jets struck military targets throughout the city, Taliban officials said. Residents said over telephone that Taliban leaders were distributing weapons to civilians. Strikes were also reported in Jalalabad.

In California, President George Bush told a flag-waving crowd that American airstrikes, now in their 12th day, were "paving the way for friendly troops on the ground." It was his clearest signal yet that Washington was taking the Northern Alliance into account in the campaign against the Taliban.

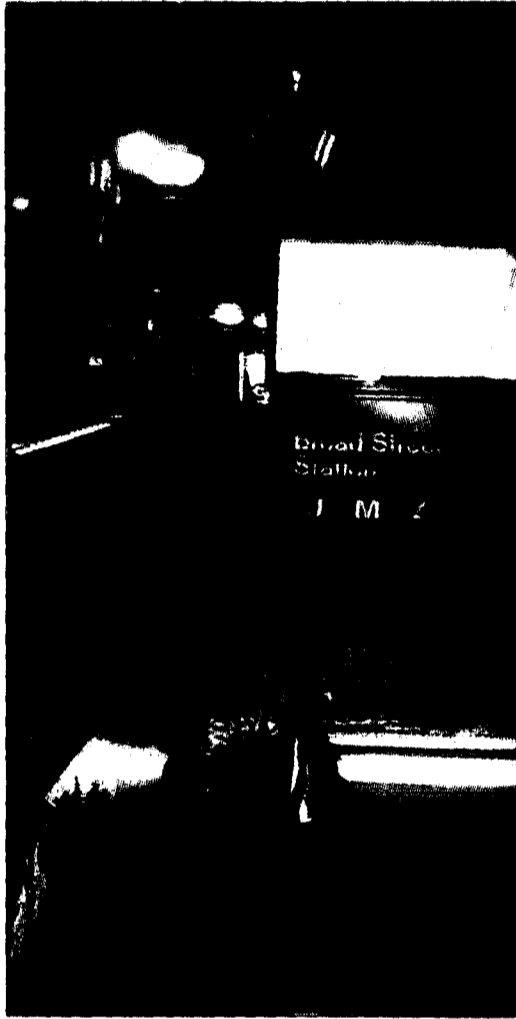
The opposition forces have been locked in combat for days in what US officials have described as a seesaw battle for Mazar-e-Sharif, the major city of the north.

A Taliban information ministry official in Kabul, Abdul Hanan Himat, admitted that the Taliban had lost control of some areas around Mazar-e-Sharif, but insisted the militia had pushed its enemy back to the south.

Anthrax: Fears of bio-terrorism in the USA grew as spores of anthrax were reported in the Manhattan office of the New York Governor, Mr George Pataki, PTI adds from Washington.

The House of Representative has been shut down for five days for the first time after exposure of at least 31 people to the bacterium found in a letter sent to the Senate majority leader, Mr Tom Daschle.

Mr Pataki said he was taking antibiotics as a precautionary measure. His staff members were being tested for the exposure.



A police officer wearing a mask comes out of a New York subway station on Thursday. Metro services were disrupted and entrances closed as officials checked out reports of suspicious powder carrying anthrax bacteria at the station. — AP/PTI

Initial tests showed anthrax bacteria sent to the NBC headquarters in New York and a tabloid company in Florida were of the same strain and possibly laboratory grown.

A employee in the New York office of CBS-TV news anchor Dan Rather has tested positive for skin anthrax, the third major TV network to be exposed to the bacterium, CBS radio affiliate said today. A New Jersey postal worker too has tested positive. The government today offered a \$1 million reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for mailing anthrax, the FBI director, Mr Robert Mueller, said.

■ More reports on pages 6 and 7

THE STATESMAN

19 OCT 2001

STRATEGIC PARTNER

The secretary of state of the United States of America, Mr Colin Powell has performed a balancing act during his visits to India and Pakistan. In the zero-sum world of India-Pakistan relations some of Mr Powell's statements may strengthen apprehensions in New Delhi of the possibility of a new Islamabad-Washington nexus that could undermine Indian interests. The primary purpose of Mr Powell's visit to Islamabad was clearly to ensure that the cooperation that Pakistan has provided in the campaign against terrorists in Afghanistan is sustained and furthered. In the last few weeks, the US has secured Pakistan's collaboration by making unprecedented concessions, including the lifting of nearly all the sanctions that were imposed against Pakistan after the nuclear tests of 1998 and the military coup of 1999. Mr Powell went a step further during his visit. In the joint press conference with Pakistan's president, the US secretary of state referred explicitly to the centrality of the Kashmiri problem to India-Pakistan relations and the need to resolve it in a manner that would accommodate the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. Mr Powell also seemed to agree with Islamabad that there were moderate elements within the Taliban that could form part of a broad-based future government in Afghanistan. Even a few years ago, such statements by a US secretary of state in Islamabad would have been enough to throw India-US relations out of gear. It speaks well for the new found maturity of India-US relations that Mr Powell's visit went off smoothly, and it was only at the joint press conference with the Indian external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, that an exercise in damage limitation was attempted.

Mr Powell clearly sought to position India-US relations on a higher plane than the tactical relations with Pakistan. Three aspects of his remarks were particularly noteworthy. First, he described the close relationship with India as part of a new US strategic rethink, and sought to convey the impression that the new Republican administration viewed India as a vital partner in every sense of the term. Second, he stated that while the campaign against terrorism was now directed against the al Qaida it would not remain limited to Afghanistan; the war would continue and fight terrorism of the kind that India had been facing. Finally, he delivered a personal invitation from Mr George W. Bush to Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee to visit Washington on November 9.

However, on Kashmir, despite some semantic juggling, Mr Powell restated what he had said in Islamabad, with the proviso that the dispute had to be solved by India and Pakistan. Mr Powell's visit makes clear that Washington believes Pakistan is central to its fight against the terrorist network in Afghanistan, and Mr Pervez Musharraf's continuation at the helm is essential to ensure Islamabad's cooperation. The US administration will, therefore, seek to strengthen the Musharraf regime, and even make concessions that may annoy India. No administration in Washington is, however, likely to abandon the growing partnership with India and the Bush administration will, from time to time, seek to reassure India and hope that New Delhi will understand the difference between a tactical alliance and a strategic partnership.

THE TELEGRAPH

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18 OCT 2001

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18/10

Bush to shore up support in E. Asia

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 17. The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, leaves today on a five-day trip to East Asia to participate in the Meeting of Leaders of the Asia Pacific as a part of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum.

Prior to leaving Washington, Mr. Bush is meeting Congressional leaders which will be followed by a stop in Sacramento, California, where he will talk about the economy besides meeting troops at the Travis Air Force base.

The President is, at this time, expected to be out of the country until next Monday and administration officials are confident that he will fully participate in the leaders' meeting on Oct. 21 and 22. At the same time, the cautionary word is that Mr. Bush may cut short his trip to Shanghai if the situation warrants.

The visit as originally put together was for 10 days with the President spending time with key allies of the United States such as Japan and South Korea. In the pre-Sept. 11 scheme of things, Mr. Bush was going to Beijing on an official visit. Now, all this is in a highly truncated fashion.

The shortened trip to East Asia does not mean that it does not carry additional significance. In fact, what is being said here is that aside from the routine discussions of the state of the world and regional economies and the usual high sounding talk about free trade, Mr. Bush will be hav-

ing international terrorism very high on the agenda but without giving the impression that other issues are being pushed to the sidelines. WS (W)

"What we want to do... is to work with every Government in which there is a substantial Al-Qaeda presence to figure out a strategy for rooting it out", the National Security Advisor, Dr. Condoleezza Rice, said. But the air strikes on Afghanistan have had a visible impact in South East Asia; and Washington is not particularly pleased with criticism coming out of some countries such as Indonesia.

The U.S. is working on an APEC Statement on Terrorism which will apparently have no references to either Osama or the strikes against Afghanistan. Rather, what is being sought is a statement that says that the Sept. 11 attacks on the U.S. is an attack on the APEC's vision of "free, open and prosperous economies" and, therefore, a threat to peace and security of all peoples of the world.

An important component of the President's trip to Shanghai is in his bilaterals with the Presidents of Russia and China and the Prime Ministers of Japan, Malaysia and South Korea.

In between the formal sessions, the President will be closeted with his National Security team. For instance, Mr. Bush will be briefed by his Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, on his trip to Pakistan and India.

THE HINDU

18 OCT 2001

Low-level air raid on Kandahar

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

KABUL, Oct. 16. - The strikes in Afghanistan took a decisive turn today with the US forces bombing the Taliban stronghold of Kandahar in the first low-level aerial attacks of the campaign.

Residents said US raids continued throughout the morning with planes buzzing overhead and repeated explosions around the city. Targets in Kabul were hit in the afternoon.

The deployment of AC-130 gunships over Kandahar, the home of Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar, was confirmed by US defence officials. The use of AC-130s marked a departure for a campaign which, since its launch on 7 October, has been conducted by fighter jets flying at high altitudes to avoid Taliban air defences.

The head of Taliban's information agency, Abdul Hanan Hemat, said the raids on Kandahar left 33 civilians dead, five after a clinic was bombed.

The US defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, earlier described Taliban figures for civilian casualties as "ridiculous" and dismissed claims that more than 200 people had died last week in the eastern village of Kadam. He



An Al-Jazeera TV image of a fire in a Red Cross depot in Kabul on Tuesday. The place was attacked by US forces. - AP/PTI

said tunnelled-out caves with ammunition had been destroyed in Kadam, sparking secondary blasts which may have damaged nearby villages.

In Kabul, at least seven explosions were heard today, one causing black smoke to engulf the northern part of the city where a military compound is

reportedly located.

Residents woke up to find their electricity cut off after bombs struck the main power station, but by afternoon it had been restored.

The use of AC-130s was seen as another sign that the USA is moving towards the deployment of troops inside Afghanistan to

Reported capture of Mazar-e-Sharif

MOSCOW, Oct. 16. - The Northern Alliance today captured the key northern town of Mazar-e-Sharif with the help of 4,000 Taliban fighters who switched sides, Russia's NTV reported. But there was no independent confirmation of the report.

The channel, reporting from Afghan Opposition headquarters in Khoja Bahauddin, said Uzbek warlord Abdul Rasheed Dostum's troops entered Mazar-e-Sharif from the south. It said the alliance has confirmed that Gen. Dostum's troops have entered Mazar-e-Sharif and that it is ferrying arms by helicopters to Dostum. - PTI

hunt down Osama bin Laden.

Red Cross warehouses hit

A bomb today hit Red Cross warehouses here, destroying 35 per cent of their contents, witnesses said, adds Reuters. A bomb landed in front of one building, injuring a Red Cross worker.

THE STATESMAN

17 OCT 2001

USA urges Apec to fight terror

REUTERS

MANILA, Oct. 15. — The USA called on Asia-Pacific countries to join efforts to curb terrorism, stop flow of funds to radical groups and protect oil supplies, a declaration to be presented at this week's Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit said.

The US draft declaration has been circulated in advance to the 21 Apec members for possible adoption when their leaders meet in Shanghai between 20-21 October, Philippine officials said today. While condemning the 11 September attacks on New York and Washington, the statement made no reference to the US-led strikes on Afghanistan or to Osama bin Laden.

"This will be a paradigm shift in Apec," a senior Philippine official said, since this would be the

first time that the Apec summit — which focuses on trade and economic issues — would issue a political declaration.

US officials presented the draft to Apec summit chair China, which then circulated it to Apec members, Manila officials said. "Leaders unequivocally condemn the attacks against the USA ... as a threat to the peace, prosperity and security of all people, of all faiths, of every nation," the draft declaration said. "The attacks are also a direct assault on Apec's vision of free, open and prosperous economies."

The statement urged Apec leaders to enhance counter-terrorism cooperation through adoption of financial sanctions to curb terrorism. It also urged Apec economies to accelerate their efforts in fighting financial crime.

THE STATESMAN

16 OCT 2002

Pro-Taliban leaders freed as Pakistan burns

Mubashir Zaidi & Agencies
Islamabad, October 15

PAKISTAN RELEASED two pro-Taliban leaders today as thousands of shops across the country downed shutters in protest against the arrival of US Secretary of State Colin Powell in Islamabad.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Maulana Samiul Haq were released a day after two demonstrators were killed at Jacobabad when a mob tried to charge into the airbase housing American aircraft.

Jamiat Ulema Islami leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman had been put under house arrest in Dera Ismail Khan a week ago on charges of inciting people to agitate against the Government's decision to side with the US. The North West Frontier Province (NWFP) Government ordered Fazlur Rehman's release last night after continued demonstrations by religious parties, demanding his release.

Maulana Samiul Haq heads the Afghan Defence Council, a pro-Taliban coalition of 35 Islamic groups and a faction of the JUL, which called today's strike.

A mob torched Wazir Mansion railway station in Lyari area of Karachi. Deputy Superintendent of Police Kharadar Shafi Rind was also injured near Lea Market when a mob attacked him. Several vehicles were set on fire.

Nearly every store was reportedly closed in the Taliban-friendly border city of Quetta. Many businesses, however, remained open in Karachi. A demonstrator was wounded during scattered clashes between protesters and authorities. Some stores were closed down in Lahore, where a police officer was injured in the stone-throwing.

In Peshawar, many shops and businesses opened on schedule. But demonstrators from religious schools took up position in front of open businesses to enforce the strike, shouting and shaking fists until owners shuttered.

In Karachi, two policemen guarding a Shiite mosque were shot dead overnight, though it was unclear if their deaths were related to US-related demonstrations. Smaller US-related clashes were also reported in southern Pakistan, where 14 people were arrested at different places.

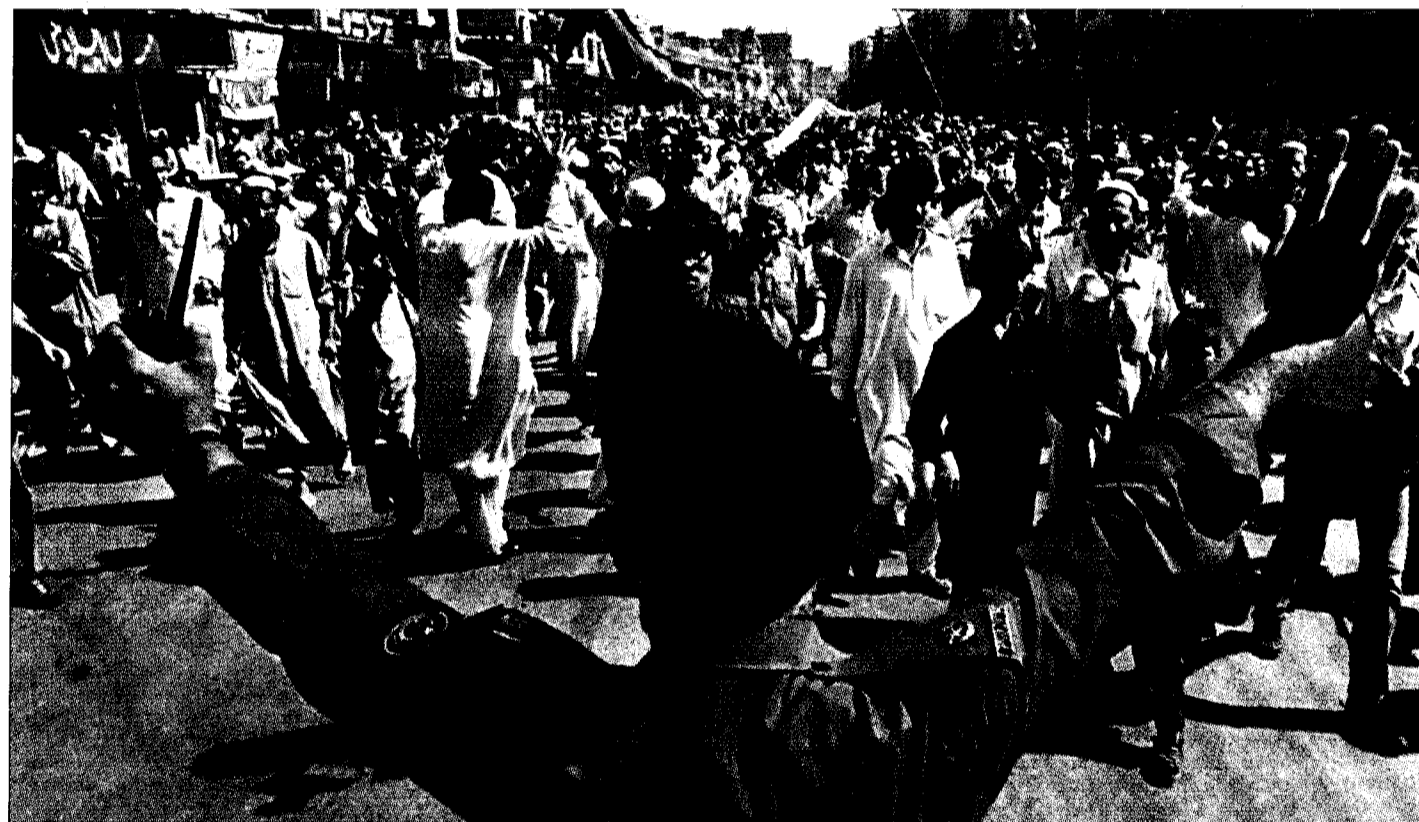
About 500 people detained in Jacobabad yesterday, were also released. Several thousand protesters evaded a security cordon set up around Jacobabad yesterday and tried to reach the airport, prompting the police and paramilitary rangers to lob tear-gas shells and start firing.

One man was shot in the chest, and demonstrators took his body from the local hospital and paraded it through the streets, chanting anti-American slogans. Another protester was shot dead.

Musharraf is likely to ask Powell to compensate Pakistan for the increased security arrangements against anti-US demonstrators.

Special police anti-terrorism units today took up positions at key intersections in armoured personnel carriers.

An Afghan Defence Council spokesman said the success of the strike has exposed the tall claims of the Government that most Pakistanis support Government action to lend unstinted support to the US including its airbases. But a Government spokesman termed the strike as partial.



Pro-Taliban demonstrators take over the streets of Quetta (top) and Peshawar on Monday.

Indonesia protests continue

Jakarta, October 15

INDONESIAN POLICE today fired tear gas, water cannon and blank warning shots to disperse a crowd of anti-US protesters outside Parliament.

Some 300 protesters from four radical Islamic groups had gathered outside the gates of the Parliament building, condemn the airstrikes on Afghanistan.

The members of the hardline Islamic Defenders' Front were armed with sticks and carried posters of US President George W Bush that read: "Wanted by the Islamic people for murder."

Police opened fire when the protesters rejected an order to disperse.

During the weekend, 27 members of the group have been arrested on charges of possessing knives and swords. There have been anti-US protests in Jakarta almost everyday.

The capital has seen activists and lawmakers stepping up pressure on Megawati to condemn the bombing campaign.

Meanwhile, President Megawati Sukarnoputri frowned on the use of military force in the fight against terrorism, but stopped short of directly criticising Washington.

"No individual, group or Government has the right to look for terrorists by attacking another country's territory," Megawati told a gathering at Jakarta's main mosque yesterday.

Megawati has been one of the first foreign leaders to sign up for the US-led coalition against terrorism after Terror Tuesday. So far, the Indonesian Government has only said it was "concerned" about the attacks and has called for restraint.

AP

Blair fails to win over British Muslims

Vijay Dutt
London, October 15

TONY BLAIR has failed in his efforts to appease the British Muslims and persuade them in believing that the war in Afghanistan is not against Islam. They are seething with anger at the action in Afghanistan despite repeated assurances from various platforms by him that the fight is against terrorism.

The Imam of the Central Mosque in Birmingham, one of the most prominent in Britain, Shayakh Riyadh ul-Haq has been blunt in rejecting even the personal assurance to him by Tony Blair. The Imam said that Blair could not convince Muslims here and "in fact the world over" that the war in Afghanistan is not against Islam.

Addressing a large congregation during the last Friday's prayers, the Imam who speaks fluent English referred to the meeting Blair held with some leaders, MPs and peers from the Muslim community at 10, Downing Street.

Blair had told them that all actions in Afghanistan were directed against terrorists and al-Qaida network.

But the Imam summarily dismissed the "tea meeting", Blair's reiterations and "propaganda" in the media that Britain and US are fighting global terrorism. "Muslims are not 'convinced', he said again and again. The respect being shown and praising the values of Islam and saying that it is a peaceful religion, has no meaning. In reality the war in Afghanistan is against all those who belong to Islamic

faith, he said. The secretary of the Central committee of Muslims, Dost Muhammad Khan was less blunt but he also said that the killing of innocents in Afghanistan was not acceptable. The Chairman of the Committee Dr Mohammad Naseem, who has been a GP here for several decades, endorsed Khan's views. He recalled that the September 11 attacks in the US were condemned widely by the Muslims here and they also equally condemn the killing of civilians in Afghanistan.

Imran Khan, the owner of a shop in Birmingham, which used to sell bin Laden's video-taped speeches was questioned a few days ago by the Special Branch detectives. The shop had been raided two years ago on the suspicion that meetings were held for planning terrorism. Khan bluntly told officers that some young Muslims wished to join in jihad and fight alongside the Taliban. He has not been charged for any offence so far.

Even some young students in the Moseley School in Birmingham told BBC's Panorama reporters that the war against Afghanistan should not have been initiated. The students from Moseley, members of the Central Committee and many others from the Muslim community in Birmingham came in special buses to Trafalgar Square to join a CND meeting to protest against the war.

One young protester told *Hindustan Times* that Blair and his allies were "out of touch with the reality". "We are all for diplomatic efforts to resolve the situation."

Protest wave worries America

S Rajagopalan
Washington, October 15

"WANTED BUSH: Dead or alive; Reward 10 million," reads a sign held aloft by Pakistani protesters at an anti-US rally. It may just have been a riposte to the US President's identical remark against Osama bin Laden, but Americans are not amused by what is happening in Pakistan.

The rising tide of anti-US sentiments in Pakistan and some other Islamic nations has the Bush administration worrying. Outwardly though, its leading lights maintain that the violent demonstrations are lesser than what had been anticipated.

A *Newsweek* poll, coinciding with Secretary of State Colin Powell's visit to Islamabad, says 80 per cent of Pakistanis regard Osama as a "holy warrior". They do not see him as a terrorist who has to be smoked out from his cave. The talking heads in some of the networks seemed to doubt the poll finding.

But other news reports from Pakistan, too, hold out little comfort for Washington.

The public anger over US retaliation may have been confined to 10-15 per cent so far, but the mood across Pakistan is "changing rapidly", reports *The Washington Post*. Even moderate Pakistanis are turning against Musharraf's decision to back the US action against Afghanistan.

The reports are a cause for concern to the US as they come at a time when it is thought to be preparing for a ground offensive. With the holy month of Ramzan approaching and the harsh Afghan winter not far away, the Pentagon is under pressure for quick results in terms of the capture or liquidation of Osama and his army. Sources said some Islamic allies and Afghanistan experts have advised the Bush Administration to ensure completion of a ground offensive, if any, by mid-November, when Ramzan begins. But the administration has refrained from saying

anything on a ground operation. Analysts believe the real challenge of holding the international coalition together will be felt when the ground offensive is launched. This is reckoned to be one of the important issues that Powell will seek to thrash out during his Islamabad visit.

The imperative to keep everyone on board has persuaded the administration not to take cognisance of some disturbing reports about Saudi Arabia's "missteps" that helped in Osama's ascendancy over a period of time. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice had emphasised that Islamic countries like Saudi Arabia have been "very cooperative".

U.S. to wipe out foreign terrorists in Afghanistan

WSN 40-13 By Sridhar Krishnaswami 15/10

WASHINGTON, OCT. 14. Senior Bush administration Cabinet members took to the airwaves in Sunday talk shows trying to allay the fears of the general public about bio-terrorism, even while discussing whether sending anthrax by mail would amount to an act of terrorism under the new scheme of things. "It is certainly an act of terrorism to send anthrax through the mail", said the Secretary for Health and Human Services, Mr. Tommy Thompson.

The Attorney General, Mr. John Ashcroft, did not conclusively link the source of the anthrax to terrorism even as he has left that possibility wide open. For now Mr. Ashcroft would go no further than saying, "It is premature at this time to decide whether there is a direct link".

In Camp David, the President, Mr. George W. Bush is closeted with key aides such as his National Security Adviser, Dr. Condoleeza Rice plotting the second and perhaps the third phases of the American operation. His Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell leaves for an important trip to Pakistan and India. One of the critical things he will be discussing in Islamabad is the political scenario for Kabul in the post-Taliban militia era. The President will be returning to the White House later in the day.

A new opinion poll shows that nearly two thirds of the Americans see the capture or death of Osama bin Laden as necessary before the Administration can consider the military action in Afghanistan a victory. According to a Time-CNN poll, 61 per cent see it in this fashion, even as more than 80 per cent say that capturing or killing of Osama bin Laden is a 'necessary' goal.

The Administration's focus right now is not on the opinion polls but in how to get into the second phase of the military strikes which will then be followed by the third and political phase of the operations. The military focus will soon be moving away from the routine pounding of fixed targets in and around Kabul and Kandahar or positions in the North East.

The United States is getting ready to focus on the elite Taliban forces. According to various reports the elite commandos of the United States and Britain which are already inside Afghanistan and in a number of neighbouring States will be carrying out intensive covert activities. They will be assisted by other commandos who will be paraded by attack helicopters from ships.

Pak. asks Masood Azhar to lie low

NEW DELHI, OCT. 14. The chief of Jaish-e-Mohammad militant outfit, Masood Azhar, has been directed by Pakistan to lie low to avoid further American punitive action, official sources said here today.

"Azhar, a protege of the ISI, was directed to lie low after he claimed responsibility for the October 1 car bomb attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in Srinagar," the sources said.

The subsequent retraction of the claim by Masood Azhar, who was released in exchange of hostages of hijacked Indian Airlines plane in December 1999, was also done under orders from the Pakistan establishment, which faced embarrassment because it had announced publicly to oppose terrorism, they said.

The U.S. on Friday last ordered freeze of all financial assets of Jaish-e-Mohammad, which has been reportedly rechristened Tehreek-e-Faqran. — PTI

THE HINDU

15 OCT 2002

U.S. forces cautioned about anthrax

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 14. With a fresh case of anthrax surfacing in Nevada, investigative and health agencies are working on two fronts as the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, is using every possible occasion to reassure Americans that the Government is on a heightened state of alert.

The fine line that the authorities seem to be walking is between the public's right to know or be informed and setting off the panic button which does not seem to be too difficult in the last three weeks.

The health authorities have been able to narrow down on what caused the problem. Senior officials are saying that the terrorism link cannot be ruled out, until proved otherwise.

The alert is very high not just in the mainland U.S. but in the seas as well — U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea are being cautioned about opening even personal mail.

It all began in Florida with one anthrax exposure that ended in death. Then it was seen as an isolated incident and the suspicion was on natural causes. But with the surfacing of more cases, the Federal Bureau of Investigation finally turned its probe into a criminal

one with domestic and international overtones.

In recent days, the authorities have been dealing with the panic surrounding bio-terrorism. Despite all the high-profile appeals of the administration to the American public to go about their businesses, cities are reporting lesser normal activity. And businesses are trying to lure the general public, but with mixed results.

In Washington D.C., the Metro opened its gates for free travel on the weekend, picking up a tab of about \$ 600,000; and the area restaurants are having extra freebies like throwing in a glass of wine for dinner. But it seems that all these have not paid off.

THANK GOD, IT WAS ONLY A SCARE:
Mr. Justin Stemplinger hugs his friend, a United Airlines Flight 1669 passenger, Ms. Tagudar Sabrina, at San Jose International Airport on Saturday, in San Jose, California. Eighty passengers, including Ms. Sabrina, and five crew members were held aboard the jet for three hours after it landed because a passenger said a man had dispersed a powdery substance in the ventilation system. — AP



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An unequal war 15/10

26.6 The longer the battle, the larger the protests

A WEEK after the start of the bombing of Al-Qaeda and Taliban targets, the coalition behind the US campaign against terrorism is already fraying at the edges. As the exodus of hundreds of thousands of people continues and civilian casualties are reported, there are bound to be qualms everywhere. Immediately, however, Europe remains firmly behind the US and Britain as do Russia and Japan, and India for the most part. China with its own anxieties about insurgents in Xinjiang province, and sensing an opportunity to move closer to the US, is mainly supportive. The weak links in the coalition just now are in the Arab and Muslim world. Just how weak will be seen over the next few days. Anti-American sentiment, as witnessed in several countries after last Friday's prayers, still brings a small, though fierce and often violent, minority into the streets to burn effigies of George W Bush and to hail Osama bin Laden as a hero. But that could change.

The potential for a wider conflagration, for the coalescing of other discontents in societies run by dictatorial governments with the bombing in Afghanistan, is ever present. Whether that can be averted will depend primarily on the efforts of Arab and Muslim leaders and also on the kind of war the US wages. A short, sharp military response risks less of a fallout than protracted, high-tech, televised bombardment from the air. General Pervez Musharraf who advocates the former seems to have it right. No matter how of-

ten it is reiterated that Afghanistan is not the target, no matter what precautions are taken to minimise human distress, over time the predominant picture of this war will be the mightiest country on earth pulverising the most impoverished. So, the Pentagon, really has a limited time frame in which to finish its job.

A long and visible military operation will be counter-productive. Extending action to other countries, possibly Iraq, could create more kinds of fissures in the coalition. Meanwhile, the leaders of Muslim countries must somehow be persuaded that appeasing the clerics and fundamentalists in their own countries is not good statesmanship. It was encouraging that the meeting of foreign ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Conference, representing 56 countries, last week clearly condemned the terrorist attacks on the US and backed the campaign against the Taliban and bin Laden. American diplomacy and more especially their own vulnerability to radical Islamist movements may account for this reasonableness. Nevertheless there is a dichotomy in how many Arab and Muslim governments present themselves to the world and to their own people. All the regimes in West Asia surely recognise that curtailing Al Qaeda capabilities is in their own interest. Even so equivocating noises come from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Indonesia and others. An awakening to reality, such as Pakistan's is still to take place.

More people, letter bombs test positive for anthrax

Washington, October 14

A THREATENING letter mailed to NBC news anchor Tom Brokaw from New Jersey, one week after the September 11 terrorist attacks, contained anthrax that infected his assistant, authorities confirmed on Saturday.

In Florida, five more newspaper employees tested positive, but none showed symptoms of infection. And in Nevada, a letter sent to a Microsoft office tested positive after preliminary tests ruled out the bacteria. A second NBC employee has possible symptoms of anthrax. The results produced near panic in America yesterday as thousands of people, terrified they had been infected by the deadly anthrax in bio warfare, flocked to hospitals across the nation. The collective hysteria only grew worse with continuing reports of new outbreaks.

New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani revealed that one of the two suspicious letters sent to NBC News headquarters had tested positive for anthrax. The letter, postmarked September 18 in Trenton, New Jersey, tested positive for anthrax, while authorities had initially suspected a September 20 letter sent from Florida to have brought the bacteria.

The earlier letter was found at the network's Manhattan headquarters when city police and FBI officials searched the offices, said Barry Mawn, head of the FBI's New York office. The anonymous

letter, which bore no return address, contained an unspecified threat and a brown granular substance. Most of it was thrown away, but the letter was retained, he said. In Nevada, Governor Kenny Guinn said a third anthrax test on a letter sent from Malaysia to a Microsoft office in Reno came back positive, but added that the risk to public health was "very, very low."

The anthrax scare began last week when a photo editor for The Sun supermarket tabloid in Boca Raton, Florida, died of the inhaled form of the bacteria, the first anthrax death in the United States in 25 years. The American Media Inc building where Bob Stevens worked was sealed off after anthrax was found on his keyboard. Two other employees turned out to have anthrax in their nasal passages, but neither has developed the disease. Both are taking antibiotics, and one has returned to work. The company was notified on Saturday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that five employees had shown antibodies of anthrax in their blood, according to Gerald McKelvey, spokesman for American Media.

"It means they had an exposure," he said. "It doesn't mean they have anthrax." CDC spokesperson Lisa Swenarski in Atlanta couldn't confirm the five employees had been exposed because testing was not complete. She said it would be another

week before final results come in. Health officials had been waiting for results of more than 35 anthrax tests checking employees and visitors to the company's headquarters, which investigators in white moon suits continued to search Saturday. About 20 postal employees who handled the company's mail were also awaiting test results.

On Friday, the FBI agent said test results of 965 people who were in the building recently found no new infections. Investigators were searching in St Petersburg, Florida, for the origin of a letter containing a mysterious powder that made its way to NBC's New York newsroom, where Erin O'Connor, 38, was infected with the less aggressive anthrax of the skin.

The FBI could not pinpoint where the letter was dropped because Trenton is a regional processing centre for southern and central New Jersey, said Special Agent Sandra Carroll. "There's over 100 different collection boxes or post offices it could have come from," Carroll said. FBI agents are interviewing mail carriers in Trenton on Saturday as part of a joint investigation with postal inspectors.

In Florida, the FBI's hazardous materials team tested various St Petersburg post offices for anthrax, said Linda Walker, an inspector with the US Postal Inspection Service in Tampa. Officials stressed the NBC case

was an isolated one. They said there was no known link to the September 11 attacks or the far more serious inhaled form that killed the editor in Florida.

Still, spooked New Yorkers scurried to emergency rooms and pharmacies for anthrax tests and prescriptions for the antibiotic Cipro. Some drugstores ran out, or limited the amounts they would sell to customers.

At the Hilltop Pharmacy, a sign warned customers they could get only a five-day supply of 10 Cipro pills. "We're filling it right now about 75 times more than usual," pharmacist Amy Sidney said.

A letter containing powder also was sent to The New York Times, but the newspaper said on Saturday that the white substance in the envelope received by reporter Judith Miller — who co-wrote a recent best seller on bioterrorism — tested negative for anthrax. Miller and about 30 co-workers in the area when the envelope was opened are taking antibiotics, and results of their anthrax tests will be released Monday. In Nevada, four Microsoft employees have been tested to date, with the results expected Monday or Tuesday, company spokesman Matt Pilla said.

Meanwhile, the anthrax panic had spread to Britain with health officials revealing that three workers from US buildings at the centre of the anthrax scares were now in Britain, undergoing tests. AP



An exhibit of the protective gear used by the 9th Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team after their certification ceremony in Los Alamitos. The unit has been put on alert since cases of anthrax appeared in Florida and New York.

Business booms in the time of panic

S Rajagopalan
Washington, October 14

NOT ALL businesses are down in the United States. With the country at war, an anthrax scare and threat of more terrorist strikes some are having a whale of a time.

The pharmaceutical industry, for one, apparently never had it so good.

Vaccines, antibiotics, antidepressants, sleeping pills, protective creams, first aid kits and what have you. They are all in great demand and many pharmacies are unable to cope with the situation.

Bayer, the drug giant, is set for a killing, thanks to the anthrax scare. Its product Ciprofloxacin (or Cipro) is the only antibiotic approved by the Food and Drug Administration for treating anthrax. A full course of the antibiotics, lasting two months, costs a tidy \$ 500.

A 25 per cent increase in Cipro production has been announced by Bayer but that may not be good enough.

Hoarding is on in right earnest with pushy patients asking their doctors to prescribe the drug. Those unable to get Cipro are turning to penicillin as a stand-by.

Smallpox vaccine is also in great demand. It has been fuelled by fears that bio-terrorists are out to revive smallpox, the dreaded disease that was eradicated worldwide in the 1970s. Researchers are examining if the available stockpile of smallpox vaccine can be diluted to make it stretch in case of a bioterrorist attack.

Gas masks, of course, have become a must item for many households after TV networks began to hold forth on the possibility of chemical and biological warfare.

Americans are being reminded time and again of the pioneer-



A pharmacist replaces Cipro on the shelf of a drugstore overwhelmed by requests to fill prescriptions for the antibiotic after a confirmed case of anthrax was reported in New York.

ing work done by the US's bete noire, Saddam Hussein, in this area.

Companies specialising in "emergency drinking water" are also eyeing a small fortune as the cash in on fears of a contamination of water sources. Water filters and purifiers are in much circulation in a country where water used to be drunk straight from the tap.

The biggest gainer of the war, undoubtedly, is the arms industry.

With no letup in the firing of cruise missiles, the big armament manufacturers are in for a big time.

According to available literature, each Tomahawk cruise missile assembled by Raytheon Systems costs \$ 600,000.

Small arms sales are also on

The clues that point to Iraq

David Rose & Ed Vulliamy
New York, October 14

THERE ARE "giveaway" signals that Iraq is involved in the anthrax outbreak now terrorising America, investigators say.

Leading US intelligence sources, involved with both the CIA and the Defence Department, told *The Guardian* that the clue which suggests a State sponsor for the anthrax cases is that the victims in Florida were afflicted with the airborne form of the disease.

"Making anthrax, on its own isn't so difficult," one senior US intelligence source said. "But it only begins to become effective as a biological weapon if they can be made the right size to breathe in. If you can't get airborne infectivity, you can't use it as a weapon. That is extremely difficult. There is very little leeway. Most spores are either too big to be suspended in air, or too small to lodge on the lining of the lungs."

As claims about an Iraqi link grew, senior health officials in Britain revealed they warned all the country's GPs last week to be vigilant about the disease. "I think we have to be prepared to think the unthinkable," said the Government's Chief Medical Officer, Dr Liam Donaldson.

The Department of Health confirmed the Government is conducting an urgent review of Britain's ability to cope with chemical or biological attacks.

It also emerged last night that three people who worked in the Florida buildings at the centre of anthrax scares are now in the UK and undergoing tests for the disease. And in America a letter sent from Malaysia to a

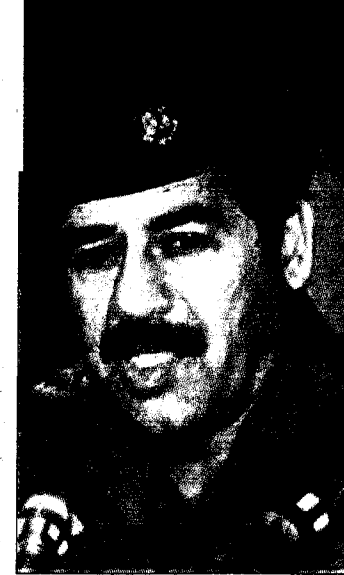
Microsoft office was found to contain traces of anthrax.

In liquid form, anthrax is useless — droplets would fall to the ground, rather than staying suspended in the air to be breathed by victims. Making powder needs repeated washings in huge centrifuges, followed by intensive drying, which requires sealed environments. The technology would cost millions.

US intelligence believes Iraq has the technology and supplies of anthrax suitable for terrorist use. "They aren't making this stuff in caves in Afghanistan," the CIA source said. "This is prima facie evidence of the involvement of a State intelligence agency. Maybe Iran has the capability. But it doesn't look likely politically. That leaves Iraq."

Scientists investigating the attacks say the bacteria used is similar to the Ames strain of anthrax originally cultivated at Iowa State University in the 1950s and later given to labs throughout the world, including Iraq. According to sources in the Bush administration, investigators are talking to Egyptian authorities, who say members of the al-Qaida, detained and interrogated in Cairo, had obtained phials of anthrax in the Czech Republic.

Last autumn Mohammed Atta is said to have met in Prague an agent from Iraqi intelligence called Ahmed Samir al-Ahali, a former consul later expelled by the Czechs for suspicious activities. The Czechs are also examining the possibility that Atta met a former director of Saddam's external secret services, Farouk Hijazi, at a second meeting in the spring. Hijazi is known to have



SADDAM HUSSEIN

troops to protect the oilfields of Basra. Contact has already been made with an Iraqi opposition group based in London with a view to installing its members as a future government in Baghdad.

Some observers fear linking Saddam to the terrorist attacks is part of an agenda being driven by US hawks eager to broaden the war to include Iraq, a move being resisted by the British Government.

The hawks winning the ear of President Bush is assembled around Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, his deputy Paul Wolfowitz, and a think tank, the Defence Policy Advisory Board, dubbed the "Wolfowitz cabal".

Their strategy to target Iraq was hammered out at a two-day seminar in September, of which the dovish Secretary of State Colin Powell had no knowledge.

The result was a letter to President Bush urging the removal of Saddam as a precondition to the war. "Failure to undertake such an effort," it said, "will constitute a decisive surrender in the war against terrorism."

In a swipe at Powell's premium on coalition-building, it continues: "coalition building has run amok. The point about a coalition is 'can it achieve the right purpose?' not 'can you get a lot of members?'"

Administration officials close to the group told *The Observer*: "We see this war as one against the virus of terrorism. If you have bone marrow cancer, it's not enough to just cut off the patient's foot. You have to do the complete course of chemotherapy. And if that means embarking on the next Hundred Years' War, that's what we're doing."

The Guardian

Powder scare on American flights

San Jose, October 14

EIGHTY PASSENGERS and five crew members were held aboard a jet for three hours after it landed at the San Jose Airport on Saturday because a passenger claimed a man had sprayed a powdery substance into the ventilation system.

"The substance was confetti from a greeting card, which the man had accidentally spilled," FBI spokesman Andrew Black said.

Police, FBI and emergency crews had set up a decontamination tent for the passengers of United Airlines Flight 1669 from Chicago.

The San Jose Airport was alerted and once the plane arrived, fire department personnel took air samples for tests, the police said.

The man's identity was kept secret, but Black said he was a longtime San Francisco Bay area resident.

The man who spilled confetti was escorted off the plane. He was reportedly stripped, washed and dressed in a "hazardous materials suit" that traps vapour. Police interrogated the man and the witness.

San Jose Fire Department chief Kevin Conant said his department has been busy responding to numerous calls of

mysterious powder.

"We've investigated everything from beach sand to baking powder to confetti. We're taking all these incidents seriously and will send all resources required for investigation," Conant said.

At Washington's Dulles International Airport, spokesperson Tara Hamilton said a powdery substance was found in the restroom of a United Airlines plane from London.

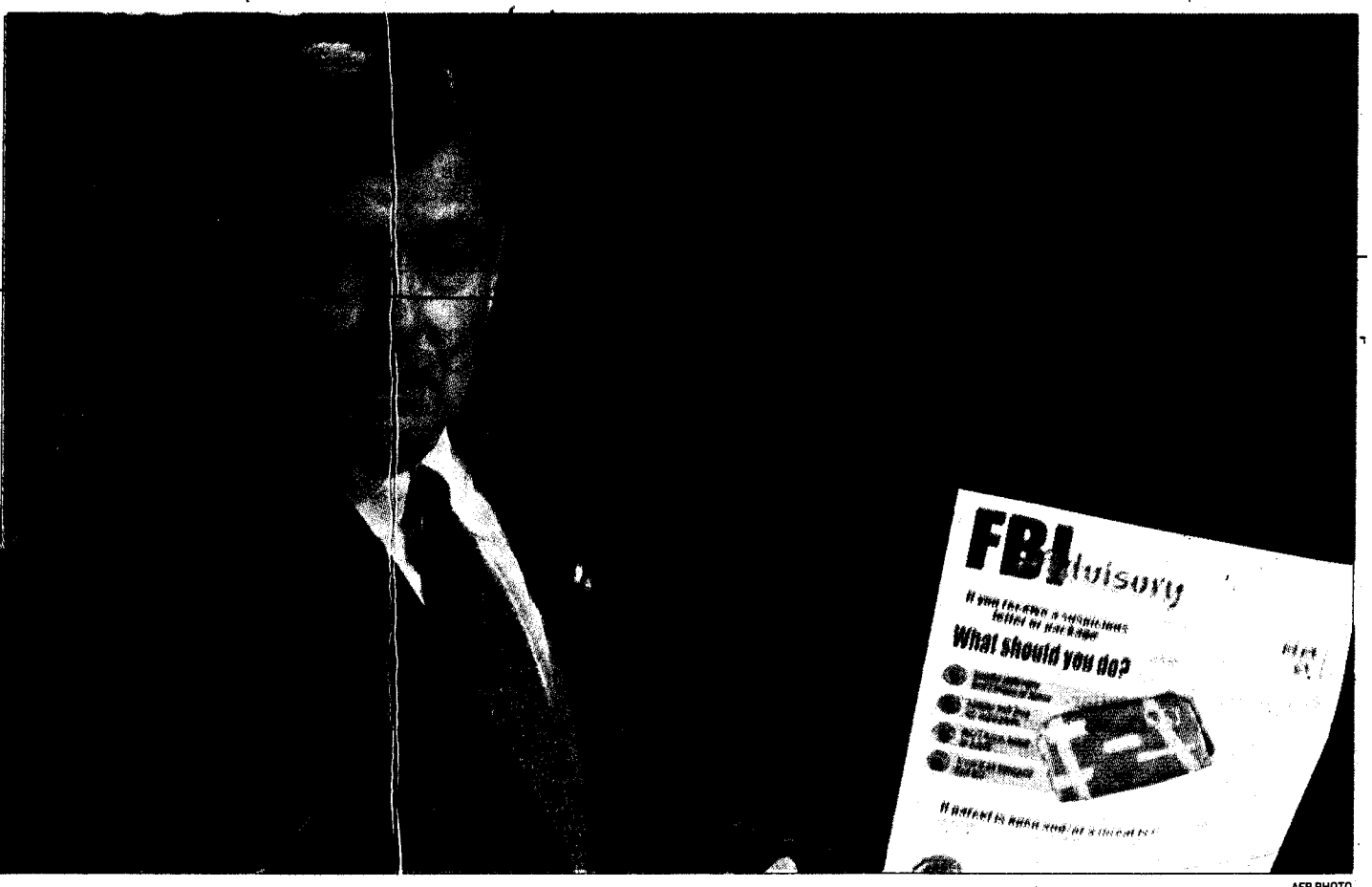
The powder was being tested at an Army laboratory in Maryland, she added. She said 17 people out of 216 passengers and 14 crew members had used the bathroom. The 17 were detained and preliminary decontamination

steps were taken.

A US Airways flight from Charlotte, NC, to Denver was diverted to Indianapolis on Saturday after a flight attendant found a white powdery substance on the plane.

The flight attendant was believed to be the only person who was exposed to the substance. The attendant reported seeing the substance in a trash can on the plane.

The passengers and crew stayed on the plane for about two hours after landing. The plane was moved to an isolated part of the airport, and the FBI and a hazardous materials team were called to the scene.



US Attorney-General John Ashcroft holds a copy of the FBI advisory on what to do in case a suspicious letter or package is received, at a Press conference in the US Department of Health and Human Services.

ANTI-U.S. RALLY TURNS VIOLENT NEAR JACOBABAD AIRFIELD

U.S. jets bomb Kabul airport

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 14. The Bush administration has opened the second week of air strikes against targets in Afghanistan with American planes and jets blasting select areas, mainly in Kabul and Kandahar. The Kabul airport, the Taliban Military Academy and an artillery garrison were the primary targets. Specific targets around Jalalabad, Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif have also been hit.

The Captain of the USS Enterprise — from where F-14s and F-18s have also been taking off for hits inside Afghanistan — has said that the American warplanes have destroyed nearly all of the targets originally assigned. "We're sort of in a clean-up mode right now."

At least three aircraft carriers, including the Enterprise are involved in the military operations. The targets include military air fields, terrorist training camps, weapons storage areas and the leftovers of the Afghan airforce, according to the Pentagon here.

On Sunday, the President, Mr. George W Bush, pledged to lead the country through "one of the darkest moments in history" making the point that ultimately the war on terrorism will triumph. "Let me be clear about this: We will win the war on terrorism and we will also continue to fight important battles at home," the President told the American Society of Anaesthesiologists in a speech delivered by videotape in New Orleans.

AP reports from Islamabad:

In the latest raids, U.S. jets destroyed Kabul's Chinese-built international telephone exchange, severing one of the last means of communication with the outside world. Residents said the capital's historic, Moghul-style Balahisar Fort was in ruins but the report



Children pose as 'holy warriors' holding toy rifles during a rally in Peshawar on Sunday. — AP

could not be confirmed because security forces kept outsiders from the area.

Other targets included the cities of Mazar-e-Sharif, Kandahar, Jalalabad and Herat, according to the Taliban Information Ministry.

An AFP report from Kabul said a U.S. plane circled the Afghan capital today, provoking waves of Taliban anti-aircraft fire, a resident said. The plane flew above the city for about 10 minutes before disappearing without dropping any bombs, according to the resident.

A Riyadh report quoted the Taliban leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar, as saying that his Islamic militia would teach the U.S. "a much more bitter lesson" than

that taught to the Soviet Union in the 1980s.

One killed in firing

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, OCT. 14. There is renewed violence in Pakistan in protest against the U.S.-led military campaign against Afghanistan with one person being killed and 10 injured on the outskirts of Jacobabad town in the Sind province today as activists of a religious party attempted to march towards an airfield reportedly placed at the disposal of the U.S.

Reports from Jacobabad said that police fired in the air as they tried to disperse several thousand anti-American demonstrators.

The protesters, who had evaded a huge security cordon around the city, hurled stones, prompting paramilitary rangers and police to fire in the air and use teargas to try to break them up.

Some 3,000 paramilitary rangers as well as soldiers have been deployed around the town after a faction of the Jamait-Ulema Islami (JUI) called for a siege of the airport to protest the U.S. 'military presence'.

When the police tried to prevent them from breaking the barricades, the protesters reportedly fought pitched battles and in the process the police opened fire.

The reports said the crowds raised slogans such as "Down with Bush dog," "American graveyard — Afghanistan and Hero of Islam, Osama bin Laden".

Pakistan, as part of its pledge to offer the U.S. non-combat logistical support for raids on Afghanistan, has allowed U.S. forces onto two airports — Jacobabad and remote Pasni on the Arabian Sea coast. The defiant mood of the religious activists just a day before the arrival of the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, does not augur well for the military campaign and is a reflection of the problems ahead for the Musharraf regime with every passing day of the attacks on the Taliban. The religious parties in Pakistan have given a strike call tomorrow.

More reports on Pages 13, 14

Bush rejects Taliban's offer on Osama

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, OCT. 14. The Deputy Prime Minister of the Taliban, Mr. Haji Abdul Kabir, tonight made a conditional offer to the U.S. for handing over Osama bin Laden to a "third country" if the U.S. was prepared to provide the necessary evidence about involvement of Osama or any of his associates in the September 11 attacks.

Mr. Kabir told a group of reporters in Jalalabad that the Taliban was ready to discuss the offer in case the U.S. was ready to stop the air strikes. If evidence of Osama's involvement was given and the bombing campaign stopped, Mr. Kabir said, "we would be ready to hand him over to a third country". He added that the third country should

be the one that would never "come under pressure from the U.S." "If the U.S. was to step back from the current policy, then we could negotiate. Then we could discuss which the third country could be," he said.

The offer came a day after the Taliban rejected a "second chance" given by Mr. Bush for the militia to surrender Osama.

Sridhar Krishnaswami reports from Washington:

The U.S. has quickly rejected the Taliban's offer to hand over Osama to a third country if the bombings are halted. "The President has been very clear there will be no negotiations," a White House spokesperson, Ms. Anne Womack, said.

THE HINDU

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BUSH

(Continued from page 1)

said the best thing to be done now was to allow the Afghan people to form a broad-based government.

Anti-American protests around the world were at their bloodiest today. Unofficial sources said about 200 people were killed in two days of religious clashes in the northern Nigerian city of Kano, quoting local residents.

Jets bombed military targets and the airport in southern Kandahar and Taliban hideouts, Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press said. Herat airport in the west was pounded in five raids, it said. In Jalalabad, US warplanes dropped bombs on a military base, said witnesses and news agencies. The first strikes hit an army installation and wounded at least six people, sources said. Two more bombs exploded on the outskirts, supposedly dotted with guerrilla camps.

Mr John Ashcroft, the US Attorney General, told NBC today that it's likely that some of the 11 September attackers were still in the country.

In Kabul, sporadic anti-aircraft fire erupted in the morning as a single plane screamed above the city. Taliban estimates more than 300 people, mostly civilians, have been killed since air raids began.

Afghan opposition commander, General Abdul Rashid Dostum, said anti-Taliban forces were preparing a "fierce offensive" in the key northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif. US airstrikes have yet to target the large concentration of Taliban forces north of Kabul, which are blocking the advance of the Northern Alliance.

THE STATESMAN

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AL-QAIDA:

(Continued from page 1)

US W 5-8
An official spokesman said yesterday that Pakistan may freeze Jaish accounts.

19/10
Six Gulf Cooperation Council countries - Saudi Arabia, Oman, UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar - today decided to immediately freeze the assets of the individuals and groups named by USA as suspected terrorists or supporters of terrorism, a report from Dubai said.

Britain and the USA termed the Al-Qaida threats as a propaganda stunt. The threats could "leave no one in any doubt about the organisation's intentions to continue, conduct and incite acts of terrorism," the Downing Street said.

Mr Tony Blair's spokesman said the latest threats were irrefutable confirmation that Bin Laden and his network had masterminded the attacks on the USA.

Powell's visit: India-Pakistan relations and Kashmir are expected to take the centre-stage during Mr Colin Powell's visit to the region, beginning tomorrow. The US secretary of state, who will first visit Islamabad, will discuss the Afghanistan situation with President Musharraf.

Kashmir and normalisation of Indo-Pak relations are expected to figure during the discussions, US officials said.

Pakistan today sought Washington's help to resume India-Pakistan dialogue and to resolve the Kashmir issue.

"The USA with other members of the UN Security Council can help recommence a dialogue between Pakistan and India so that we, with the rest of the world community, can attempt to arrive at a solution acceptable to the people of Kashmir," the Pakistani foreign minister, Mr Abdul Sattar, told ABC TV.

The Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman, told *Star News* that what was happening in J&K was a "freedom struggle".

THE STATESMAN

15 OCT 2002

Nigeria anti-US riots kill 200

WSD
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Kano (Nigeria), October 14

MORE THAN 200 people have been killed here in two days of religious clashes triggered by protests against US air strikes in Afghanistan, residents said today.

Most of the killings took place overnight as rival Muslim and Christian gangs rampaged the heavily populated districts on the outskirts of this north Nigerian town despite a night curfew and shoot at sight orders.

One of the worst hit areas was Zangon district, a Muslim stronghold with a significant Christian minority. Those fleeing were Christians.

"People were slaughtered in Zangon. There cannot be less than 200 killed last night," said one of the many residents ferried in buses under military escort to Sabon Gari where most non-Muslim immigrants live.

"As I speak with you now I can see a body burning in the street," said a Sabon Gari resident on telephone. "He seems to be a Muslim who strayed into Sabon Gari."

Killings were also reported in the Brigade district adjoining Sabon Gari. Officials have so far only spoken of "many killed" and have not issued any definite toll. "People are stranded. People are trapped in various locations," said another resident who spent the night holed up in a city office.

Hard-pressed security forces used civilian buses to rush what were reported to be hundreds of injured to hospitals.

Heavily armed soldiers guarded the few churches that held Sunday services, witnesses said.



AP PHOTO

A soldier sits guard in front of a poster of Osama bin Laden at Kano in northern Nigeria on Sunday.

Streets of northern Nigeria's commercial nerve centre were deserted.

President Olusegun Obasanjo's federal Government sent reinforcements of soldiers and police to the city from neighbouring States. Tanks and armoured cars patrolled the streets as night fell yesterday. Police banned all vehicles from the streets on the second day of protests against US action against Taliban.

The protests, which began after Friday prayers, were intended to be peaceful, but residents said they were hijacked by jobless hoodlums.

Religious riots have claimed hundreds of lives in Nigeria over the last two years. Nigerian authorities are always keen to play down death figures so as not to provoke an escalation.

Obasanjo's two-year-old civilian Government, which took over from military rulers, has been struggling with a spate of religious violence in the predominantly Muslim north.

Analysts say the upsurge of sectarian violence followed the introduction of strict Islamic sharia penal code by some northern States, despite protests by non-Muslims.

The clashes in Kano are potentially the most dangerous for oil-producing Nigeria as it is the biggest urban centre in northern Nigeria and a hotbed of Islamic radicalism.

Jakarta protests

Sixty-five anti-US protesters have been arrested in Jakarta for possessing weapons, police said today.

AFP says the arrests were made after hundreds of protesters from central Java arrived at a station in Jakarta yesterday, police spokesman Anton Bahrul Alam told AFP. He said those being questioned were members of the solo-based front Hizbullah and the Islamic Youth. They were carrying sharp weapons and slingshots, Alam said.

Reuters

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

15 OCT 2002

Posturing for the polls?

AS PUNJAB approaches the Assembly elections, machinations are on to capture "vote banks". And a string of incidents of sacrilege, since the beginning of September, which has sent ripples through the Sikh community, has come in handy.

The genesis of the present crisis can be traced to the self-styled godman, Baba Piara Singh Bhaniara, who has compiled his own scriptures, "Bhavsagar Granth".

The Baba and some of his followers have been arrested and his book has been banned by the State Government, as most of the Sikh organisations found it an "insult" to the Guru Granth Sahib and claimed that the Gurbani had been distorted.

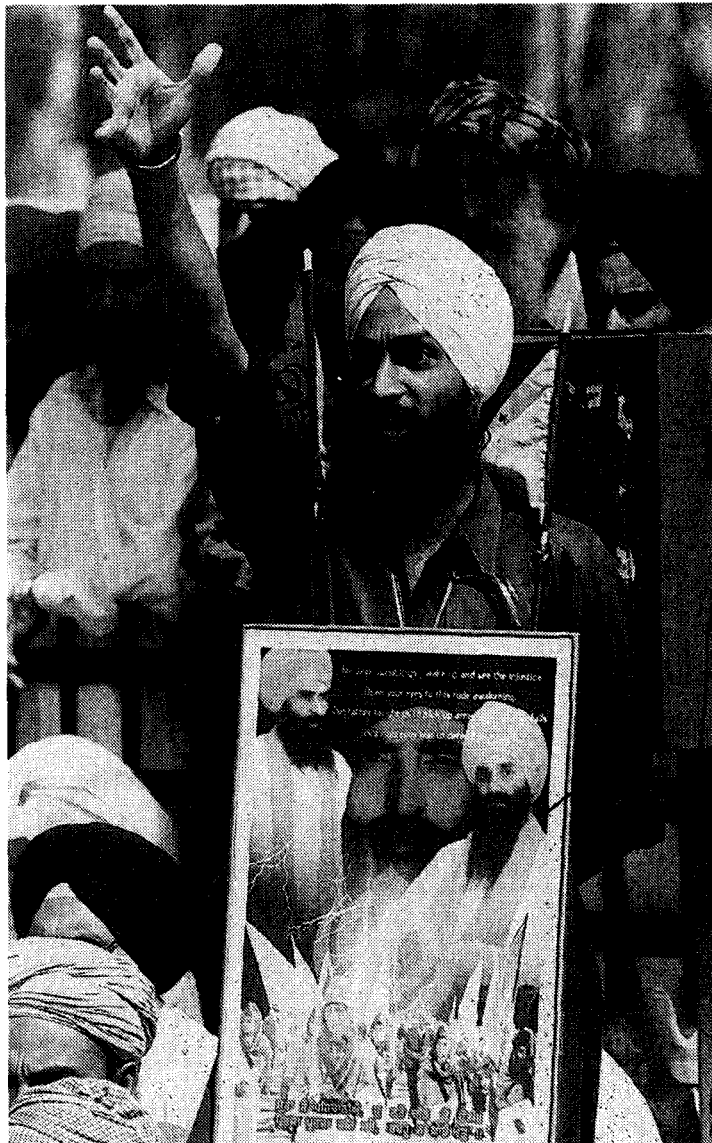
The Baba, a former class four employee in the State Government, is said to have a considerable following among the Scheduled Castes, which explained the beeline politicians, including from the ruling party, made to visit him. The visits were recorded for posterity in photographs in the Baba's book.

The present Akal Takht Jathedar, Giani Joginder Singh Vedanti, like one of his predecessors, Bhai Ranjit Singh, excommunicated the Baba for assuming titles considered blasphemous under Sikh *Maryada* (code of religious conduct). The issue came to the centre stage of Punjab politics after activists of the newly-formed Khalsa Action Committee (KAC), headed by Mr. Charanjit Singh Channi, disrupted a religious congregation at the residence of one of Baba's devotees in Ludhiana. The Baba's book was snatched and damaged.

Subsequently, another organisation was formed in the area around Jagraon, which had local representatives from the major Akali factions and right wing radical groups.

This organisation called the Sukha Singh Mehtab Singh Committee claimed it had the support of the local authorities to "cleanse" the area of the granths penned by the Baba.

These incidents were said to have sparked off the retaliation from the Baba's supporters, who now face charges of torching copies of the Guru Granth Sahib. The first incident of sacrilege was reported from Rattangarh



Protests in Chandigarh against desecration of the Guru Granth Sahib... the fringe to the fore.

The recent problems within the Sikh community could result in a greater relevance for fringe and right wing elements in the Punjab elections. Sarabjit Pandher reports.

and Rasoolpur villages of Ropar district, after which the Baba was arrested.

This was followed by protests by different Akali and Sikh organisations, some of whom have sought action under Section 302 of the IPC, as they quote a Supreme Court judgment where the Guru Granth Sahib was accepted as a "juristic person".

While the State Government has been facing flak for delayed and inadequate action, the ruling party has been trying to

shift blame on to the Congress for the troubles.

The Chief Minister, Mr. Parkash Singh Badal, said any action taken against the Baba, who has encroached upon forest land as well, could have led to a situation akin to the infamous Akali-Nirankari clash of 1978.

While the projected crisis as well as the "threat" to the religion is bound to consolidate the "Sikh vote bank" behind different shades of the Shiromani Akali Dal, analysts feel the "Hindu vote bank" will go the Congress way just

because the BJP is pro-Akali.

A greater need could be felt within the ranks of the ruling Akali faction led by Mr. Badal for a rapprochement with the recently-formed Panthic Morcha, an alliance of rival Akali factions and some right-wing radical outfits, whose bargaining capacity could increase.

As the prevailing controversy is related to the Sikhs' "intra-community" affairs, it could also have a bearing on issues related to the identity crisis, already articulated on various occasions including the Khalsa Tercentennial and implementation of the controversial "Nanakshahi" calendar.

The consolidation of the "vote banks" will not represent any communal divisions, as it is not based on animosity emerging from the interests represented by the separate communities in the State, observers say.

Once again the pressure is on the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), apex Sikh religious body, to use its jurisdiction and settle such issues and also prevent any danger to the State's social fabric.

However, the SGPC chief seems to be encouraging Akali factionalism rather than suggesting a way out.

However, in the event of the various Akali factions failing to come together on a common platform, the runup to the coming elections could see a greater relevance for fringe and right wing elements.

As far as the electoral arithmetic is concerned, the fissures among the SAD factions, the Government and the SGPC may not be beneficial for the ruling dispensation.

Mr. Badal faces a predicament — one of the most challenging of his career — with the religious reservoir he nurtured to outdo his rivals such as Mr. G. S. Tohra, now cramping his style. Mr. Badal had entered the religious sphere during the 300th anniversary celebrations of the Khalsa.

All those who posed a challenge to his assuming the mantle of the globally undisputed leader of the Sikhs were relegated to the margins.

These leaders now represent the Panthic Morcha and he may have to do business with them.

THE HINDU

15 OCT 2002

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WSW

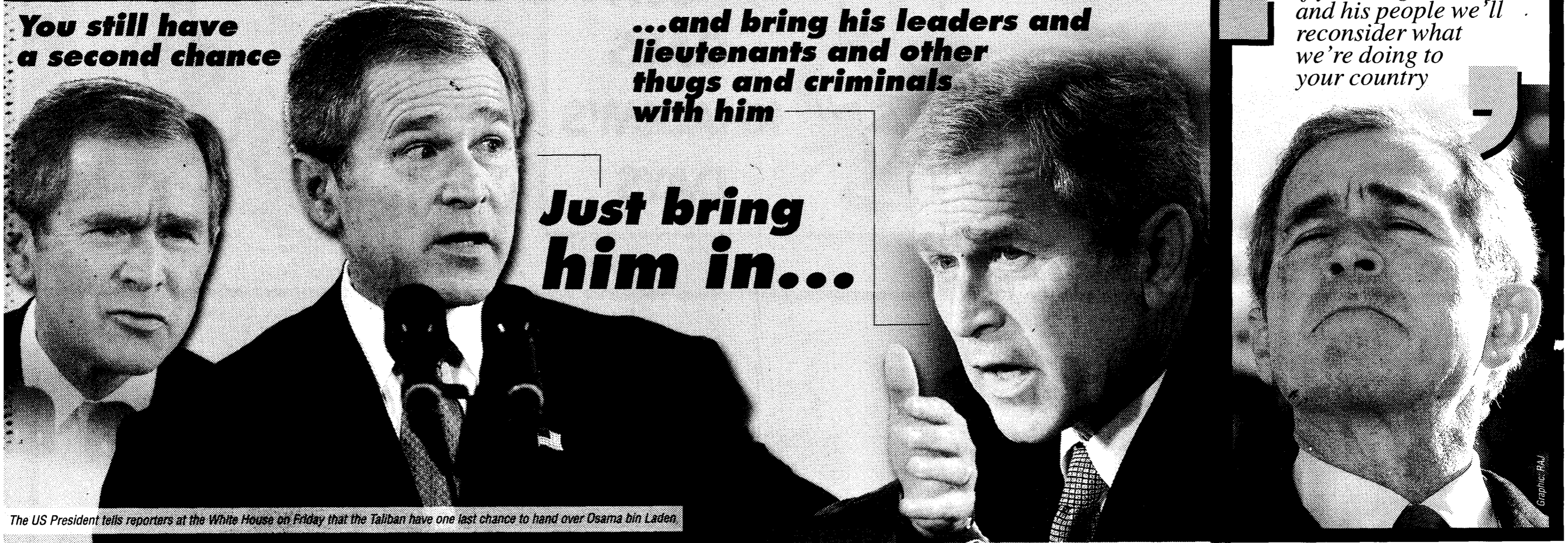
BUSH CASSIDY AND THE LADEN KID... NOW SHOWING ON PRIME-TIME TV

You still have a second chance

...and bring his leaders and lieutenants and other thugs and criminals with him

Just bring him in...

If you cough him up and his people we'll reconsider what we're doing to your country



The US President tells reporters at the White House on Friday that the Taliban have one last chance to hand over Osama bin Laden

Suspicion splinters world into two

FROM DEAN YATES

Western tourists under attack in Indonesia

Jakarta, Oct. 13 (Reuters): Two German tourists have been kicked and punched after being mistaken for Americans on Indonesia's Lombok island while other foreigners are being harassed there, state media and a tour operator said today.

The incidents mark the first reports of assaults on foreigners in Muslim-dominated Indonesia since Washington said it would hunt down Saudi-born militant Osama bin Laden over the September 11 attacks on the United States.

Bin Laden is being sheltered by the Taliban in Afghanistan, and the US and British air strikes that began on the Islamic nation last Sunday, have enraged radical Indonesian Muslim groups.

Separately, Vice-President

Hamzah Haz split with the government's policy of avoiding open criticism of the air strikes by calling on Washington to halt the campaign. He also said Washington had failed to prove bin Laden was behind the devastating attacks.

The official Antara news agency said the Germans were attacked this week when a tour company took them to a traditional sporting event at a remote village on staunchly Muslim Lombok.

"The two German tourists were punched and kicked because it was thought that they were Americans," Antara quoted Putu Aria Tusan from the tour company as saying. It was unclear if the Germans were badly injured.

Antara said objects were also thrown recently at a van carrying around five other tourists in a separate incident on Lombok, which lies next to the famous re-

sort island of Bali.

Despite small anti-US protests in several cities and threats made against Americans and Britons, foreigners have been left alone in major centres, including Jakarta. The capital was protest-free today for the first time in days.

Tusan confirmed the attack on the Germans but said it happened two weeks ago. "Nowadays, people in small (Lombok) villages still spook tourists by asking fiercely if they are Americans," he said.

"But in the cities and in tourist places... where tourism is the main business the situation is relatively peaceful. People there have even promised to protect their tourists. The government has to be aware (of this) and I urge (the government) to maintain security so nothing like this happens in the future," Tusan said.

Despite its beauty and tourist

appeal, Lombok has occasionally suffered an image problem from bouts of communal and religious unrest. Parts of the island are also very poor.

The government in Jakarta has said it would not tolerate any violence against foreigners, although it has taken little action against radical Muslim leaders frequently making threats.

Haz's position puts President Megawati Sukarnoputri in a bind as she tries to tread a delicate line between general Muslim distaste for the strikes and keeping a vital ally and economic partner on side.

Quoted by Antara, Haz called for an end to the strikes so that civilians were not killed. He also said Washington needed to prove bin Laden's involvement in the September attacks, a remark unlikely to please the US embassy in Jakarta.

China puts Pak travellers under scanner

Beijing, Oct. 13 (Reuters): China has barred people from large parts of Central Asia from its airlines following the September 11 attacks on the United States, an airline official said today.

The official at flag carrier Air China said the government had issued a note to all Chinese airlines limiting sales of tickets to citizens of such countries. "We do have such a circular concerning restrictions on issuing tickets to citizens from 20 mostly Middle East countries," the official said.

"But I don't know if the regulation applies only to international flights or to domestic flights as well." The foreign ministry declined comment and officials at China's airline regulator were not available. But Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* said the circular ordered the airlines to issue tickets to citizens of named countries only with the approval of the local Chinese embassy or consulate.

It named the countries as Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and the United Arab Emirates.

It also listed Palestine, which is not yet recognised as a country. China has backed the US-led war on terrorism following last month's attacks on New York and Washington. Next week, it is also staging the first major international conference since the attacks.

Ministers from the 21 members of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum meet in Shanghai and their leaders, including US President George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin, assemble for a summit next weekend.

A woman carries a bundle of food packets, air-dropped by U.S. planes, near Kandahar, Afghanistan on Saturday. Food packets lie scattered all around. — AP

CIVILIAN AREA HIT BY ACCIDENT: U.S.

WSW HD-1 14/10
'Osama network disrupted'

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 13. Pentagon officials have acknowledged that an American warplane missed its target and struck a residential neighbourhood near Kabul. A 2,000-pound bomb went off target and hit a civilian complex but Washington disputed the Taliban accusation that about 300 civilians had been killed thus far in U.S.-British operations.

The Foreign Minister of the Northern Alliance, Mr. Abdullah Abdullah, was quoted as saying that the Taliban was not able to launch counter-offensives against them as a result of the U.S. strikes.

The Republican administration has not formally responded to the Taliban rejection of the "second chance" to cough up Osama bin Laden and his cohorts. But Washington made it known that the air-strikes and the subsequent operations would be intense.

The White House said that the U.S. operations had disrupted Osama's network. "We have disrupted the terrorist network inside Afghanistan. American forces dominate the skies over Afghanistan and we will use that dominance to make sure terrorists can no longer freely use Afghanistan as a base of operations," the President, Mr. George Bush, said in his weekly radio address.

On Saturday, U.S. planes targeted their munitions on airports and military bases in Kabul and Kandahar. The objective is to substantially weaken the Taliban in the southern positions of Kandahar so as to give a window of opportunity to the Northern Alliance for its offensive.

Unnamed U.S. defence officials said that there were signs of dis-

content in the Taliban forces and that there were defections, the Taliban militia denial notwithstanding.

The U.S. is particularly targeting the Al-Qaeda training camps of Osama. There is suspicion that the Al Qaeda has been producing deadly nuclear and biological weapons. "What we believe is that they have a crude chemical and possibly biological capability. And if there's nuclear capability, it is liable to be more radiological than fissile," an official said. Military planners and law enforcement officials are worried that while the Al-Qaeda's methods of delivery of these deadly weapons may be non-existent or crude at best, bizarre inventions may cause problems.

Politically, the Bush administra-

tion is watching how the anti-Taliban coalition is coming together. Getting rid of the Taliban is just the beginning as an array of groups and military warlords are waiting on the wings for their share of the cake.

The authorities are in a state of alert in the wake of anthrax exposures. On Friday, a fourth victim surfaced and there are increasing reports of people getting "a white powdery substance" in the mail.

"Our nation is still in danger. But the Government is doing everything in our power to protect our citizenry," Mr. Bush said on Friday. He urged people to go about their business, saying, "We cannot let terrorists lock our country down. We can't let terrorists, a few evildoers, hold us hostage."

Anthrax panic again

NEW YORK, OCT. 13. Reports of a fourth anthrax case in the United States since the September 11 terrorist attacks sent New Yorkers scurrying to hospitals, intensifying fears about bioterrorism in a city and nation already on edge. The New York Mayor, Mr. Rudolph Giuliani, announced on Saturday that a second threatening letter sent to the NBC news anchor, Mr. Tom Brokaw, contained the anthrax that infected his assistant.

The letter, postmarked September 18 in Trenton, New Jersey, tested positive for anthrax. Initially, authorities believed a September 20 letter sent from Florida might have carried the anthrax.

The NBC employee, Ms. Erin O'Connor, contracted the skin form of anthrax after opening a "threatening" letter on September 25 addressed to Mr. Brokaw that contained a powder.

Ms. O'Connor noticed a dark-coloured lesion three days after the letter was received; on October 1, she began taking the antibiotic Cipro. When the lesion started developing the characteristics of anthrax, "a very alert and astute clinician" ordered skin tests. Officials said they expected Ms. O'Connor to recover quickly.

They stressed it was an isolated case and there was no cause for alarm. Panic spread, with people reporting suspicious packages from coast to coast. Officials played down a link to terrorism, but the Vice-President, Mr. Dick Cheney, expressed scepticism that there was no relation. "The only responsible thing for us to do is proceed on the basis that it could be linked," he told PBS. — AP

THE HINDU

14 OCT 2002

Press anthrax panic button for publicity

S Rajagopalan
Washington, October 13

MEDIA IS at the centre of the bioterrorism panic gripping the US. "Terror mail" laced with anthrax found its way into American Media Inc offices in Florida. An NBC News employee in New York is down with the infection.

The *New York Times* newsroom was evacuated on Friday after a reporter opened an envelope that spilled the dreaded white powder. Though initial tests did not point to anthrax, the powder is being retested.

News organisations across the US have suddenly realised that the media is the target in this round. They have put in place new, stringent norms on handling all incoming mail.

Why this targeting of media? It's simply because publicity is guaranteed, confessed some journalists. Friday was proof enough of that. The networks accorded saturation coverage to the anthrax scare, eclipsing the action in Afghanistan and on the streets of Pakistan.

"Terrorism is usually conducted through small incidents that have a huge psychic impact on the people," said *Newsweek* editor Mark Whitaker. If so, then the anthrax scare has hit bullseye.

Ciprofloxacin, the only drug approved to treat the infection, is suddenly in great demand. The fast-depleting stocks have prompted the authorities to issue a public appeal against hoarding and self-medication.

19/10
Federal agencies say a link is still to be established between the anthrax envelopes and the September 11 attacks, but Vice-President Dick Cheney has a different view. He believes that Osama bin Laden's men are trying their hand at bio-terrorism. The NBC case marks the second active anthrax infection. In the first case, Bob Stevens, photo editor of *The Sun*, had died in Florida. Two other colleagues of Stevens were exposed to anthrax. In the NBC episode, Erin M O'Connor, an assistant to well-known anchorman Tom Brokaw, contracted the infection after opening a threatening letter, addressed to Brokaw. The letter was postmarked September 20 and opened on September 25.

The terror mail to NBC and *The New York Times* appear to have originated from the same place. Both bore the postmark of St Petersburg, Florida. The NYT mail was addressed to reporter Judith Miller, a specialist on West Asia who is author of a book on bioterrorism.

Investigators are grappling with another anthrax case in Nevada. A mail from Malaysia to a Microsoft office in Reno has "tentatively tested positive" for anthrax. Microsoft had originally sent a mail with a cheque to a vendor in Malaysia. But it has returned with the cheque—along with pornographic material and the suspected anthrax potion.

Related reports on Page 11

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

'We can have normal ties with Pak only when violence in Kashmir ends'

Interview of the Week

SHOBHAN SAXENA meets FRANK WISNER

US Ambassador to India from 1994 to 1997, Frank Wisner played an important role in attracting American investments to India and in the peace initiatives in South Asia. Before New Delhi, his assignment was as Under Secretary of Defense Policy. Prior to that, he served as Under Secretary of State for International Security Affairs. Wisner is now Vice Chairman, External Affairs, the American International Group (AIG) in New York. Well-versed in the subcontinent's affairs and the oil politics of Central Asia, Wisner talks about the war on Afghanistan and how it could influence US policy towards the subcontinent. Excerpts:

■ Now that the United States has declared war on Al-Qaeda and Taliban, could you please tell us what compelled the American government to take this action?

The United States military action is the most timely and appropriate. The American government gave ample warning to Taliban to close down terrorist camps and turn over Osama bin Laden. But they did not respond. This action was required to check international terrorism network being run from Afghanistan. It's the right action against those running international terrorism network and also those who are harbouring and supporting them.

■ There is a speculation that the US might widen its attack and some more countries may come under attack. Do you foresee that happening in the next few days or weeks?

I have seen a great deal of speculation in the Indian-American press that the strikes against terrorist might spread to other countries. I think it's premature to say that. There are other methods to check terrorism. The military option is not the only option available to the United States. And at this juncture I am not prepared to speculate that the military action may spread to other countries.

■ Why did the US government decide to include a country like Pakistan whose record on terrorism is not clean in this



coalition against terrorism?

It is very important to put together a broad-based coalition. When the former Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, there was only one nation that could help us in checking that. That was Pakistan. And this time too, Pakistan being a frontline state could help us. It's good that Pakistan decided to join the international community in this war against terrorism.

■ But this decision has caused some major concern in India that the US may overlook what Pakistan is doing in Jammu and Kashmir?

See, we have had a very whacky relationship with Pakistan. And I do believe that the US cannot have normal relations with Pakistan till cross-border terrorism in

Kashmir goes on. The US wants to see that the violence there ends. Only then we can have normal ties with Pakistan. And I also deeply believe that political dialogue between nations of the middle east and India and Pakistan is necessary for solving the disputes. There is no need for India to worry about this.

■ But since the US needs Pakistan more than India at the moment, some in India believe that Pakistan can exploit the situation to its advantage in Kashmir. Do you agree with this position?

No, let there be no doubt that we want to build strong relationship with India. And that relationship is not tied to US relations with Pakistan. India is a major power — an international power. The bi-

lateral relationship between the two countries is important to us. I do not think it's right to see our bilateral relationship in the light of US ties with Pakistan. That belittles India. And we do understand India's concern about its security and acknowledge that cross-border terrorism is a very serious issue.

■ What role do you see for India in this war against terrorism?

India is a respected country. It's a big power. At this moment we need a sustained international campaign against Al Qaeda and in this regard India's advice is very important. We know that India has a very important role to play in South Asia.

■ But lifting of sanctions against Pakistan has paved way for US arms sales to Pakistan. That is again a cause of concern for India.

I think it's unlikely that first American step after lifting sanctions against Pakistan would be supplying arms to Islamabad. As far as Pakistan is concerned, I think, our priority is different. What Pakistan needs at the moment is economic and political stability and we would like to see that that happens in Pakistan. Selling arms to Pakistan is not our priority.

■ What impact do you think these terrorists attacks and this war against terrorism will have on oil companies and oil prices?

Yes, the terrorist incident definitely had an impact on oil companies and prices. There has been a demand and supply imbalance since the terrorist hit the United States. The incident aggravated the recession already there. As people are not travelling much, there is more supply and less demand, and the oil prices have gone down. But the situation may improve soon.

■ Some people are saying that the US is waging a war against Afghanistan as it wants a foothold in the region to have better access to and control over oil and gas resources in Central Asia. Is there any merit in this charge?

Garbage. This is absolutely garbage. The war on terrorism is being done only from the security point of view. The US has not gone to the region with any business interest in mind but for peace. It's to get over the scourge of terrorism and to make Afghanistan free from terrorists.

INDIAN EXPRESS
INDIAN EXPRESS
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14 OCT 2002

'PAUSE' IN AIR OPERATIONS ON FRIDAY

Bush gives another chance, Taliban mocks at offer

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 12. After pounding targets in the early hours of Friday, the Pentagon indicated air operations against Afghanistan were being slowed down on account of the Muslim holy day of Miraj al-Nabi.

But the U.S. Defence Department was also careful in qualifying what this "pause" meant. "Military operations continue," said the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Richard Myers. This means there has been a pause in going after fixed and planned targets, but the aircraft are on the lookout for moving targets — military convoys.

An assortment of planes and jets took to the skies early on Friday to take on targets to the north of Kabul. But after dawn, the raids tapered off and the jets returned to their carriers in the Arabian Sea.

Meanwhile, the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, gave the Taliban militia a second chance. "If you cough him (meaning Osama bin Laden) up and his people today... we'll reconsider what we are doing to your country. You still have a second chance. Bring him in. And bring his leaders and lieutenants and other thugs and criminals with him," Mr. Bush said from the East Room of the White House during the course of his first prime time press conference.

Mr. Bush said it might take a year or two to unravel the terror network behind the September 11 horrific attacks on New York and Washington, but maintained that the bombing raids on Afghanistan had already put Osama's network on notice and on the run. "I want him (Osama) brought to justice". He said he did not know if Osama was alive or dead but this mattered little.

(A PTI report from Islamabad said the Taliban rejected Mr. Bush's renewed demand to hand over Osama and mocked at his offer to stop attacks in Afghanistan. The Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Salam

Zaeef, laughed away Mr. Bush's offer, saying Mr. Bush would make some "more offers" after losing more in the war. "We reject this offer. The world has seen that the Afghans cannot be dictated," he said.)

Earlier in the day, the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, said in a briefing that the Navy fighter jets were keeping a close watch on possible targets and would attack them, if detected.

The Pentagon said the airdrop of relief material for the Afghan people scheduled for Friday would go on as planned.

Caves, bunkers targeted

The U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, said caves and bunkers were being specifically targeted with a variety of munitions, including the 5000-pound GBU-28, known as "Bunker Busters".

The Defence Department released a photograph showing an airfield in Herat, Afghanistan, which had a number of planes and jets parked prior to the bombardment. Heavy damage was seen in the second photograph with the aircraft in total shambles.

Unnamed Pentagon officials say that the U.S. jets may have hit the Taliban leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar's Chevrolet Suburban. The hit may have come about on Wednesday, *The Washington Post* says. The occupants of the vehicle may have been family members or top officials of the Taliban militia.

Defence and intelligence officials were tight-lipped on whether or not they believed the caves being used for fortification and operations were occupied at the time of the attacks. The belief is that this may remain unknown as persons would be buried in the aftermath of the punishing raids.

The Pentagon is also saying that the U.S. may be moving away from fixed assets to "emerging targets" such as troops concentrations. It is also keen on softening up the ground resistance to help the Northern Alli-

ance begin its land offensive.

One view is that while the bombing runs have substantially weakened the Taliban militia and destroyed many of their fixed targets, the game is far from being over. In fact, Mr. Rumsfeld said air defences, including mobile missile launchers, remained a problem.

Both the Pentagon and the State Department have denied that the U.S. was going after civilian population. "... any assertions that we are deliberately targeting civilians are totally baseless," the State Department spokesman said.

Nation building role

For a person who has been quite critical in the past of nation building exercises, Mr. Bush seemed reconciled to the fact that the U.S. would indeed have to play that role in Afghanistan if stability and peace were to materialise in Central Asia.

This in many ways is a policy shift for, this Republican administration, in being critical of the Clinton era, had said the U.S. should not be in the business of nation building in failed states. But in indicating that the U.S. was in Afghanistan for the long haul, Mr. Bush also made it clear that nation building of that country should be in the hands of the U.N.

"It would be a useful function for the United Nations to take over the 'nation building'. I would call it the stabilisation of a future government after our military mission is complete," Mr. Bush observed.

In the immediate context, he called for patience and sought to reassure American people that the noose is being tightened on the Al-Qaeda, slowly but surely. One of the lessons learnt from the Vietnam War was that a guerrilla war cannot be won through only conventional forces. In the present War on Terrorism, Mr. Bush argued that the U.S. and its allies were using methods other than military force such as cutting off financial flows to terror outfits.

THE HINDU

10 OCT 2001

More protests in Indonesia

JAKARTA, OCT. 11. Thousands of Muslim students and activists took to the streets in eight Indonesian cities on Thursday, the fourth day of protest against U.S.-led air strikes in Afghanistan.

About 800 protesters marched through Jakarta's main square to the heavily guarded U.S. Embassy, where police and demonstrators clashed on previous days. "U.S. equals United Satan," said one banner. The Embassy was open on Thursday after being closed for three days because of security concerns.

More than 200 protesters also rallied outside the British Embassy. Police said they had arrested six people for burning U.S. and British flags. It is a crime under Indonesian law to destroy foreign flags. However, Jakarta police spokesman Lt. Col. Anton Bahrul Alam said there were no plans to arrest Muslim activists who have threatened to round up and expel Westerners. The Government has condemned the threats.

About 90 per cent of Indonesia's 210 million people are Muslim, making it the world's most populous Islamic nation. However, the depth of anti-American feeling is unclear. While there has been some violence, most protests have been small and peace-



Members of an Indonesian Muslim group raise anti-U.S. slogans in front of the American embassy in Jakarta on Thursday as they protest the U.S.-led attacks in Afghanistan. — AFP

ful. In an analysis released on Thursday, the Brussels-based International Consultative Group said radical Islam represents only "a small minority of Indonesians but it has the capacity to mobilise people in the streets."

The Indonesian Government, wanting to win back Western foreign investment for its crisis-hit economy, has said it supports the U.S. war on terrorism. However, it

has also called on Washington to show restraint in its military campaign in Afghanistan. On Thursday in Palu on the island of Sulawesi, a crowd of more than 3,000 marched in front of a local parliament building.

They burned U.S. flags and chanted: "Go to hell America!" About 500 people also protested outside the Japanese Consulate in Makassar also on Sulawesi. — AP

THE HINDU

12 OCT 2001

Anti-terrorism campaign strains US-Israeli ties

Barbara Slavin
Washington, October 11

THE CAMPAIGN against Osama bin Laden is severely testing the USA's relations with its closest West Asian ally, Israel, which many Muslims say is a root cause of the September 11 attacks. How Israel deals with its long-festering conflict with the Palestinians, and how they respond, could determine the fate not only of peace prospects but the Arab world's fragile support for the US-led anti-terrorism coalition.

In the early stages of the conflict against Osama and his Afghan protectors, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat is proving to be a more agile diplomatic player than Israel's Government, a role reversal from the 1991 Gulf War.

A decade ago, Arafat sided with Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein and encouraged Palestinians to demonstrate against the US. This time Arafat quickly proclaimed support to the anti-terrorism coalition.

On Monday, he went so far as to send in Palestinian police to quell a pro-Osama demonstration in Gaza and, for the first time since a Palestinian uprising began a year ago, the police shot two demonstrators.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon initially tried to justify strikes against Palestinians by equating them with Osama's terrorists. Under intense US pressure, Sharon pulled back. But last week, in response to continued Palestinian attacks, he gave the go-ahead for Israeli forces to enter Palestinian-ruled areas. On Tuesday, Israeli bulldozers flattened farmers' fields in Gaza.

During the Gulf War, Israel accepted the US pleas to stay on the sidelines even when 39 Iraqi Scud missiles rained down on the Jewish State. Arab members of the US coalition refused to participate if Israel got involved.

GERMAN COUPLE ATTACKED IN RIYADH

A MAN threw a Molotov cocktail at a German couple in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday in an incident believed related to heightened international tensions following last month's attacks on the US, diplomats said on Thursday.

The couple escaped unhurt but the episode has prompted the German embassy to advise Germans in the Kingdom to tighten their personal security.

"A man wearing Saudi national dress threw a bottle with a burning liquid toward the couple's car as they drove toward their compound. The bottle hit the front of the car and broke on the other side of the street," a diplomat said.

Reuters, Riyadh

Sharon, frustrated at being asked to play a similar role in this conflict, assailed the Bush administration three days before the Afghanistan attack. He accused the administration of "appeasing" Arab countries by not targeting anti-Israel terrorist groups, and compared the US policy to the British sellout of Czechoslovakia to the Nazis in 1938.

The White House called Sharon's comments "unacceptable". Sharon quickly apologised. But the remark has left a bitter aftertaste, US officials say.

Moreover, the US did not block Syria from joining the UN Security Council on Monday even though Syria is on a State Department list of 7 nations that sponsor terrorism. Last week, President George Bush, who had blamed Arafat for refusing to halt the Palestinian uprising, said for the first time that a Palestinian state was part of his

"vision" for West Asian peace. Sharon aides criticised the comment as rewarding violence.

On September 21, Secretary of State Colin Powell wrote to the sponsors of a Senate bill that would have punished Arafat's Palestinian Authority for failing to follow through on its pledge to forgo violence. The Bill "would be counterproductive to our coalition-building and peace process efforts and we would like to see it withdrawn," Powell wrote. The Bill was withdrawn.

The Bush administration's desire to build a broad coalition against Osama keeps it from ostracising Arafat who remains the symbol of Palestinian nationalist movement.

The abrupt change in diplomatic favour has upset some Israel supporters.

Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice-chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations, says Sharon's "appeasement" charge was "perhaps an unfortunate choice of words but was an expression of cumulative frustration."

Powell has spent hours on the phone with Sharon and Arafat but has not visited the region. Instead, he is soon going to Pakistan and India, another set of rivals whose long territorial dispute not far from Afghanistan could crack the US coalition.

Israel's supporters insist that there is no real link between the attacks on the United States and US support for Israel. Hoenlein notes that enemy No. 1 for Osama and his followers are pro-Western regimes throughout the Muslim world. "The enemy is democracy and blue jeans, not Israel," Hoenlein says.

But the Palestinian issue has been a central Muslim cause for more than 50 years, a fact bin Laden highlighted in a video broadcast on Sunday.

USA TODAY

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

12 OCT 2001

17/10 Chemical Imbalance 6-12

The US government is keeping a close watch on bio-terrorism after initial reports suggested that some organised group may have been responsible for causing the death of a South Florida resident by deliberately exposing him to anthrax — a bacterial disease that had been eradicated in that country. The scare could not have come at a more inopportune time for the US, as it tries hard to instil a sense of security in a society traumatised by the events of Terrible Tuesday. The scare in fact confirms some of America's worst fears. First, that policing cannot guarantee that the US will not be the target of a devastating chemical and biological attack that could potentially kill thousands of people. Secondly, the unchecked proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) has made it possible for America's enemies — particularly terrorists — to acquire the military capabilities of attacking it without being detected. Indeed, today, the proliferation of WMDs, particularly bio-chemical weapons, is the most pernicious 'epidemic' that potentially threatens not just the US, but the entire planet. For global bio-chemical weapons proliferation renders irrelevant the alleged rationale of militaristic credos like 'deterrence through mutually assured destruction' on which the fate of the world hinges ever so precariously. (S)(W)

However, in the present circumstances, it is difficult to sympathise wholly with the US, which is partly responsible for creating the situation it finds itself in. The US has not only been the largest producer of WMDs like bio-chemical weapons — such as the defoliant Agent Orange which was extensively used in the Vietnam war — but has also abetted in their proliferation. It has handed them out to its allies as rewards for securing US interests and facilitating its ambitions around the world. Moreover, by imposing economic sanctions and issuing diktats such as the CTBT — which it itself ignores — the US has prevented other nations from developing WMDs. Predictably, this duplicitous policy has fomented global instability by escalating the arms race. Opponents of such 'nuclear apartheid', such as India, were pushed by the need to secure their national interests into acquiring and producing their own atomic deterrence. Those who could not afford to develop nuclear weapons opted for the technologically easier and economically cheaper fix of producing bio-chemical weapons; some sold them to other countries to offset production costs. The unchecked proliferation of bio-chemical weapons and the current threat of bio-terrorism trenchantly underscores the increasingly urgent need to eliminate WMDs of all descriptions. But this is easier said than done. Various biological and chemical weapons conventions drawn up over the years, have either been sidelined by political and economic imperatives or have become too porous to be effective. Also because the future of bio-chemical weapons has come to be inextricably linked to the nuclear weapons question: Bio-chemical arms are looked upon as the 'poor man's nuclear weapon'. Given this, not many nations around the world will be too keen on signing or ratifying any prospective treaty which may disadvantage them.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

12 OCT 2001

Black Tuesday and after

REUTERS

LONDON, Oct. 7. — Following is a chronology of major developments around the world between the attacks on 11 September and the start of US strikes on Afghanistan today.

TUESDAY SEPT 11 — The World Trade Center in New York is destroyed when two hijacked planes crash into its towers. Another plane hits the Pentagon near Washington and a fourth crashes in Pennsylvania.

— President George W Bush pledges to "hunt down" those responsible.

— Stocks and US dollar plunge, safe-haven bonds soar as most U.S. markets and Wall Street institutions close.

— U.S. airspace closed.

— Officials say people with possible links to Osama bin Laden are the likely perpetrators.

WEDNESDAY SEPT 12

— Mr Bush says he will make no distinction between the perpetrators of the atrocities and those who harbour them.

THURSDAY SEPT 13

— The US secretary of state, Gen Colin Powell confirms that Bin Laden, believed to be in Afghanistan, is a suspect.

— NATO and Russia issue rare joint statement calling for international efforts to combat global terrorism.

— Mr Yasser Arafat calls on Arab states to declare readiness to join coalition against terrorism.

FRIDAY SEPT 14

— Mr Bush visits World Trade Center ruins, having declared a national day of remembrance. Europe observes day of mourn-

ing. 8/10
— Leader of Taliban defends Bin Laden against U.S. accusations.

— US Senate approves \$40 billion for counter-terrorism, rescue and recovery, authorises force against perpetrators.

SATURDAY SEPT 15

— Mr Bush says USA at war, Bin Laden prime suspect.

MONDAY SEPT 17

— NYSE reopens after longest shutdown since Great Depression.

TUESDAY SEPT 18

— Taliban closes Afghan airspace, air defences on alert.

— Examination of options activity and trading in airline shares indicates possible plans to profit from the disaster.

WEDNESDAY SEPT 19

— Last major restrictions on US airspace lifted.

— American Airlines says cutting at least 20,000 jobs.

THURSDAY SEPT 20

— Afghan clerics recommend Osama leave the country, but Washington demands he be turned over.

— Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa says Arabs won't aid retaliation for the attacks if Israel takes part.

FRIDAY SEPT 21

— Mohammad Zahir Shah, exiled former Afghan king, appeals for emergency assembly to elect head of state, form government.

SATURDAY SEPT 22

— Mr Bush lifts sanctions imposed on Pakistan and India.

MONDAY SEPT 24

— Mr Bush says Bin Laden and Al Qaida network's assets frozen, many other governments

later announce similar actions.

— Taliban defence minister Mullah Obaidullah says he is mobilising 300,000 more men.

— Bin Laden quoted on television urging Pakistanis to fight any assault on Afghanistan by "crusader Americans".

— President Vladimir Putin says Russia to step up arms supplies to Afghan opposition.

TUESDAY SEPT 25

— Saudi Arabia severs diplomatic relations with Taliban, leaving Pakistan the only state to recognise them.

— The USA changes code name of "Operation Infinite Justice" military build-up to "Operation Enduring Freedom" after objections from some Islamic scholars.

THURSDAY SEPT 27

— Mullah Mohammad Omar warns Afghans of perils of collaborating with the USA to win power.

— Mr Bush announces \$500 million in federal funding for aviation security, Air Force authorised to order commercial planes shot down if they threaten US cities.

— FBI releases names, pictures of 19 suspected hijackers, for first time linking some to Bin Laden's network.

FRIDAY SEPT 28

— British journalist Yvonne Ridley arrested on suspicion of spying near Afghan border with Pakistan.

SUNDAY SEPT 30

— Taliban ambassador to Pakistan says his movement is hiding Osama for his own safety.

TUESDAY OCT 2

— NATO invokes mutual defence clause after US produces "conclusive" evidence

against Bin Laden.

— Bush administration reiterates refusal to negotiate on surrendering Bin Laden, after call for talks by Taliban.

THURSDAY OCT 4

— Mr Tony Blair tells parliament firm evidence links Osama to at least three of the hijackers. — Washington's Ronald Reagan National Airport reopens.

— Mr Bush says USA to provide \$320 million in aid to alleviate refugee problems in Afghanistan.

— Taliban call ministers to special meeting in Kabul, threaten punishment for anyone supporting ex-king's return.

FRIDAY OCT 5

— Zaeef says Taliban to try Bin Laden in Afghan court if United States provides solid evidence against him.

— US defence official says 1,000 US light infantry troops en route to Uzbekistan.

SATURDAY OCT 6

— G7 finance ministers and central bank chiefs vow new measures in drive to track down groups that fund terrorism.

— White House rejects Taliban offer to free eight aid workers if US halts threats against Afghanistan.

— Mullah Omar orders release of Ridley.

SUNDAY OCT 7

— Taliban says moving extra 8,000 fighters to border and shoring up defences near Kabul.

— Pakistan detains leader of a pro-Taliban Islamic party.

— Eyewitnesses see big flashes in skies north of and near Kabul, Mr Bush later tells nation that US military has begun attacks against Taliban, al Qaida.

THE STATESMAN

1 2 OCT 2001

Allies for the Moment

But US not Blind to Pakistan's Ploys

By K SUBRAHMANYAM

WASHINGTON: The US moves to enlist the help of Pakistan in its proposed campaign to capture Osama bin Laden and replace the Taliban have caused understandable concerns in India. While India wholeheartedly supports the US joining the war on terrorism, there are worries whether general Musharraf will not extract a price from the US for his cooperation by getting Pakistani terrorism against India and the proxy war in Kashmir exempted from the definition of terrorism. External affairs and defence minister Jaswant Singh's visit to Washington and his meetings with president George Bush and his key advisors and officials should go some way in reassuring the Indians. Significantly, secretary of state Colin Powell's remarks included terrorism in Kashmir as being part of global terrorism.

The US overtures to Pakistan have to be viewed in perspective. While Mr Rumsfeld is visiting Egypt, Oman, Uzbekistan and Saudi Arabia, Pakistan is not on his itinerary. British prime minister Tony Blair has visited Pakistan as well as India. This is in keeping with his call for a global war on terrorism. All the media reports in the US indicate that US-Pakistani cooperation in dealing with Taliban and Osama bin Laden is not very intense. A major article in the *Washington Post* of October 3, 2001 under the byline of Bob Woodward, refers to how the Clinton administration's efforts to capture bin Laden through a commando raid from Pakistani soil approved by Nawaz Sharif and then ISI chief general Ziauddin was aborted by the military coup of general Aziz which led to the takeover by general Musharraf in 1999. An op-ed article by Jim Hoagland dwells on the unreliability of Pakistan as an ally. Anti-US demonstrations in Pakistan have received wide coverage in the US electronic media. So also the US emissary's discussions with ex-king Zahir Shah and the Northern Alliance.

The Americans are sensitive to the Pakistani ISI and armed forces being penetrated by Taliban and pro-bin Laden elements. In his interview with CNN on September 30, general Musharraf did not show any signs of compromise on the Taliban or bin Laden. While he admitted that the Taliban and bin Laden would not yield and, therefore, a US military action was inevitable,

he gave no indication of any support to US war objectives. His earlier speech in which he made it clear that he was yielding to the US demand to join the coalition only in the same spirit in which the Holy Prophet made tactical compromises with his enemies to bide his time to vanquish them later has not passed unnoticed. Therefore, even while US officials will continue to maintain in public that US-Pakistan intelligence cooperation is going on well, the US will be very careful in accepting at face value any intelligence offered by the Pakistani ISI without independent verification.

General Musharraf has also made it clear that Pakistani land facilities are not likely to be available except as a last resort. The Pakistani ruler is attempting to run with the

to resist military operations from the north. While Saudi Arabia and the UAE have cut off diplomatic links with the Taliban, Pakistan has not, exposing its close ties with the Kabul regime.

The US has extracted permission from Pakistan to overfly its airspace for conducting operations against the Taliban. Therefore, Pakistan is a crucial factor in America's strategy against the Taliban. That does not necessarily mean that the US will rely on Pakistan for its commando operations. Pakistan finds itself in an unenviable position. The more the US asserts that its intelligence cooperation with the ISI is proceeding well, the greater will be the tension between the Taliban and the ISI. If the ISI double-crosses the US, the latter will take that into account when dealing with Pakistan after the operation is over.

A non-Taliban regime in Kabul will be a setback for Pakistan and a major demoralising factor for the jihadi groups in that country. When the campaign is over, and Osama bin Laden and the Taliban are eliminated, the jihadi groups will have to reconcile themselves to general Musharraf's cooperation with the US in the outcome of this campaign. General Musharraf will have to make up his mind at that stage to crack down on the jihadi forces. Simultaneously, he will have to tackle the madrassas as well. General Musharraf cannot claim any gains out of his cooperation with US — however nominal they may have been — without facing the jihadis.

Those Americans who are sympathetic to Pakistan usually cite Pakistan's cooperation with the US during the cold war, particularly during the Afghan war, to certify Islamabad's loyalty as an ally. Of late, the media in the US is coming out with stories of what happened during the '80s and how those developments, narcotics, jihadism and the creation of an international network of money-laundering and crime have led to the present situation when homeland United States is being targeted. There is also an awareness that this war is one between multiculturalism and unicultural sectarianism all over the globe. That is also the core issue in Kashmir's proxy war. There is no way Pakistan will notch up any gains from this war unless it joins the global mainstream value of multiculturalism — in other words, secularism.

IN BRIEF

- Sections of the US media feel Pakistan is not a reliable ally
- The US will not accept at face value any intelligence offered by Pakistan
- Cooperation with Pakistan makes tactical sense for the US at present
- Ultimately, Pakistan will have to rein in fundamentalists

hare and hunt with the hound. Pakistan has opposed US support to the Northern Alliance or negotiating with ex-king Zahir Shah. Given these factors, India must be careful in assessing the nature of US-Pakistan cooperation and its likely long-term consequences.

The US strategy to attempt to cultivate Pakistan in the war against the Taliban makes eminent tactical and strategic sense. Pakistan is geographically adjacent to Afghanistan and, therefore, is in a position to provide facilities to launch a military operation against Afghanistan. Second, by compelling Pakistan to cooperate at least publicly with the US-led coalition, a wedge is created between the Taliban and the non-jihadi public in Pakistan. Pakistan's reluctant cooperation with the US opens a new front against the Taliban which has to divide its forces and attention between the military effort from the north and south. Pakistan has been compelled to close its border and stop the flow of further supplies, including fuel, to the Taliban. This is bound to hurt the Taliban in terms of its capability

THE TIMES OF INDIA

12 OCT 2001

Bush's terror list excludes Jaish-e-Mohammed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, Oct. 10. — President George W Bush today issued a list of 22 "Most-Wanted" suspected terrorists, including Osama bin Laden, with huge rewards on their heads. But the list does not include leaders of Pakistan-based outfits like Jaish-e-Mohammed.

Mr Bush issued the list during a visit to the FBI headquarters. Among those who figure in the list are Bin Laden, who carries a reward of \$10 million, his two deputies and several members of his al-Qaida network implicated in earlier bombings overseas.

The others named in the list include Egyptians Ayman al-Zawahri and Mohamed Atef, who have long been

identified as Bin Laden's most trusted lieutenants.

US officials have linked both men to the 11 September strikes. Interpol has issued an arrest warrant for al-Zawahri for "masterminding several terrorist operations in Egypt" and "is accused of criminal complicity" for committing premeditated murders.

Atef is a former police officer, identified by the US authorities as a key military strategist and training director for Bin Laden.

Others in the list are those identified last week by Mr Tony Blair — Ahmed Khfaklan Ghailani and Sheikh Ahmed Salim Swedan. They were al-Qaida operatives involved in the US embassy bombings in 1998. Saif al Adel, a senior al-Qaida member, reportedly provided

training to tribes in Somalia where US troops were attacked and killed in 1998. His name figures in the list. The other names in the list are Ibrahim al-Yacoub and Abdel Karim al-Nasser, named as suspects in the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia in which 19 US servicemen were killed.

'USA will not be caught in Kashmir issue': India is concerned that the US-led war against terrorism will "sidestep" Pakistan-backed terrorism in J&K, Jane's defence weekly has said, a report from London adds.

Quoting US officials, the weekly said Washington would not allow itself to be caught in the Kashmir dispute.

"The Bush administration will focus

on building its coalition against terrorism as a first step in a larger conflict, shifting its attention to the definition of terrorism and which groups fit such a definition at a later date," the officials said.

"The rules of engagement have changed with regard to Pakistan now that the USA needs its help and guidance against Osama bin Laden and the Taliban," the report quoted a foreign diplomat as saying.

The dispute between New Delhi and Islamabad over Kashmir, once considered a "nuclear flashpoint" by Washington, has been relegated to the background as it isn't "expedient" to raise it now, he said.

For the USA, Pakistan is now the frontline state in the war against terrorism, the report said.

Kashmir to dominate talks with Powell: Pakistan today said the Kashmir issue and the need for a "purposeful and result oriented dialogue" between New Delhi and Islamabad would figure prominently in discussions with the US secretary of state, Gen. Colin Powell, during his forthcoming visit to Islamabad, a report from Islamabad adds.

"Naturally the discussions would focus on Afghanistan. But Indo-Pakistan relations, particularly the Kashmir question, and the need for purposeful and result oriented dialogue between the two countries (will) make an important part of deliberations," the Pakistan foreign office spokesman, Mr Aziz Ahmad, said. Details of the visit has not yet been finalised but Pakistan is attaching a

lot importance to it as Gen. Powell is the first Cabinet ranking official to visit Pakistan since Mr Bush assumed office. Economic issues are also likely to figure in the talks.

Had India confirmed dates for external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh's visit to Islamabad? Mr Ahmad said: "We have not heard anything about the dates." Pakistan would welcome visits either by Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee or Mr Singh.

To a question that Mr Bush openly contradicted Gen. Musharraf's assertions on Monday that the on-going military campaign in Afghanistan would be short, Mr Ahmad said: "Our position remains that it should short and targeted. However this fight against terrorism could be a long-drawn out affair."

THE STATESMAN

11 OCT 2001

APD-14
 Blair in W. Asia to woo leaders 10

By Hasan Suroor W

LONDON, OCT. 10. The British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, had his work cut out as he embarked on a diplomatic mission to West Asia today to shore up the Muslim world's waning support for the U.S.-led military action in Afghanistan.

The visit, shrouded in secrecy for security reasons, was seen here as perhaps his most difficult yet, with the Governments in the region facing growing public hostility to the strikes on a Muslim country.

Mr. Blair's visit coincided with an emergency meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Conference in Qatar amid increasing concern in Islamic countries over the precise aims of the Western alliance after the U.S. indicated that it could extend the action to "other organisations and other states", regarded as a coded reference to Iraq. Mr. Blair fuelled speculation when in an interview with Abu Dhabi Television in Geneva, where he stopped over to meet the UAE President, Sheikh Zayed, he did not rule out action against states suspected of sheltering terrorists.

As calls for Britain to clarify its position ahead of Mr. Blair's talks with Arab leaders grew, his aides this morning released an official document in Oman stressing that the immediate priority was to hunt down Osama bin Laden and eliminate his terrorist network in Afghanistan. No action against any other country was con-



The British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, reviews a guard of honour at Muscat airport in Oman on Wednesday, where he was greeted by the country's Special Representative for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Omar Zawawi. — AFP

plated right now, and if such a situation arose a decision would be taken after discussion with allies.

Officials were quoted as saying that Britain would insist that any action be compatible with international law. It was also stressed that as of now, there was no proof that Iraq was sheltering terrorists.

On Sky TV, its correspondent accompanying the Prime Minister said the impression he got was that while further action beyond Afghanistan was not ruled out, it was "way down" the road.

A strong anti-Western sentiment greeted Mr. Blair as the media across the Arab world at-

tacked the U.S. for its support to Israel. Even in the "friendly" Saudi Arabia, there was denunciation of what the Arab News called the "violent retribution" unleashed by the U.S.-led forces in Afghan-

istan. Observers said confronted with a menacing public mood, few Governments in the region could afford to be seen publicly endorsing the Western alliance. "Messrs Bush and Blair may tell the world they are going to win the war against terrorism but in the Middle East, where Osama bin Laden is acquiring almost mythic status among Arabs, they have already lost," according to the West Asia expert, Mr. Robert Fisk. From Lebanon and Saudi Arabia to Jordan and Egypt, the "Anglo-American bombardment" of Afghanistan was seen as unjust and anti-Islamic.

At home, liberal opinion insisted that Mr. Blair distance himself from any move to extend the war beyond the Afghan borders. He was criticised for making "ambiguous" remarks suggesting that military action against Iraq was not ruled out.

"Mr. Blair must be explicit, and he must speak for Britain's interests which are to help build a long-term international coalition against terrorism. An attack on Iraq is a line which must not be crossed in current circumstances," *The Guardian* warned in an editorial. The Liberal Democrats demanded that the Prime Minister clarify his position more convincingly.

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1 1 OCT 2001

AFGHANISTAN TO IRAQ?

There will be no support for a change of focus

THE Americans are gingerly testing the waters to gauge the support or lack of it that there may be for a strike at Iraq, on the pretext that it is a state that is sponsoring terrorism. It would seem that the effort is to make up for lack of any spectacular results from the massive bombardment of Afghan cities in the wake of the terrorist attack on New York and Washington. They may be driven to it for two main reasons. One, they are discovering that it is by no means easy to get Osama and his father-in-law Mullah Omar, the Taliban leader, although we are told that they nearly got Omar who left his house in Kandahar barely fifteen minutes before it was destroyed in an attack. It is not known whether it was entirely fortuitous. One is driven to the conclusion that the Americans want quick results to satisfy domestic pressures and they do not seem to be getting them. A diversion in the shape of an attack on Iraq would be a particularly ill-advised move. The sanctions and no-fly zones have been in place over Iraq for more than a decade, several inspection teams on the ground have combed the land and failed to come up with any credible evidence of weapons of mass destruction for some time, be they equipment or chemical or biological weapons. When Iraq lost patience and drove out the last inspection team on grounds of bias, not a charge effectively rebutted, no steps have been taken since either to introduce inspectors again or to lift the sanctions. France and Russia have for some time been prominent in opposing continuance of the sanctions and if attacks from the air are resumed George Bush's uneasy coalition over Afghanistan would collapse in a heap. Iraq is not a state sponsoring Islamic terrorism, it is modern state, has lots of friends all over the globe and antipathy over the invasion of Kuwait is a distant memory; all that remains is America's personal enmity for Saddam Hussein, not a credible basis for further air strikes.

Indonesia and Egypt, will join France, Russia and India, among others in criticising any such rash and desperate move, Iran may remain quiet for the sake of old animosities and Pakistan would breathe more easily if this means the pressure is a little less over Afghanistan. But that is all. Colin Powell is coming here for other reasons but if he raises the prospect of dealing with Iraq at the same time he will have an impossible task to plead for time to deal with known terrorist camps in Pakistan. Musharraf is already nervous over an anti-Taliban regime taking charge in Afghanistan; to urge that Taliban and the Northern Alliance should combine in a new government in Kabul to please Musharraf will do two things, it will antagonise Russia and displease India. Besides the proposal has as much merit as a coalition government in Srinagar with Jana Krishnamurthy and the Imam of Jama Masjid. The Americans show little sign of being prepared to recognise reality on the ground, they still advocate solutions which have the only merit of satisfying their needs; foreign or domestic. We keep stressing this because it needs to be stressed. Terrorism is indeed a world-wide phenomenon; there will be very considerable support for an attack on it wherever it rears its head. Conversely if it is perceived that the whole idea is to sub-serve American interests and as soon as New York and Washington have been avenged, it will all go back to square one; freedom fighters in Kashmir despite evidence to the contrary, for instance, then the world will indeed become a much more dangerous place than it is already. Why? Because the world's impatience with hypocrisy will take greater hold.

THE STATESMAN

1001 2001

MILITARY RESPONSE

Only Limited Success Likely In Afghanistan

By GURMEET KANWAL

THE first war of the 21st century began the day the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon building in Washington, DC were terror-bombed by a virulent Islamist fundamentalist network that now girdles the globe. President George W Bush has declared war on terrorism and warned his countrymen, allies and friends that operation "Enduring Freedom" will be a long drawn affair. In this "conflict without battlefields and beach-heads" while the real war will be against the vast global terror network of Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda and its many associate terrorist organisations and will undoubtedly require time, patience and painstaking effort to succeed, the United States administration will feel compelled to show some early results to assuage the wave of anger and bitterness still sweeping across America. To this end, the US and allied forces' military juggernaut is rolling forward and the Taliban militia in Afghanistan will bear the brunt of its massive firepower.

POTENTIAL

The initial US military objectives will be two-fold. First, to destroy the Taliban's war waging potential so that a more representative and moderate regime can be eventually installed in Kabul. Secondly, to destroy bin Laden's known training camps and hideouts and bring him to justice. The Taliban's military arsenal comprises combat aircraft (10 to 15 SU-22 fighter bombers, five to 10 MiG-21 fighters, about 40 transport aircraft and 10 cargo helicopters), 20 to 30 Scud surface-to-surface missiles, 500 tanks, assorted artillery pieces including rocket launchers and air defence weapons such as the ZU-23 twin barrel portable gun and Frog short-range surface-to-air missiles.

These and the airstrips at Kabul, Kandahar and Bagram will be the primary targets for stand off weapons like air-to-surface missiles and even Tomahawk cruise missiles on the first few days after air strikes are launched. The shoulder fired Stinger surface-to-air missiles approximately 80 of which are still held by the Taliban, will impose considerable caution on US pilots. These missiles were given by the CIA to Pakistan's ISI during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s and were passed on by the ISI to the Taliban as well as the militant outfits that it sponsors in Kashmir.

The secondary target list will include previously identified headquarters and communications centres, known fuel dumps, arms and ammunition stores and related military assets, especially those in the old Afghan military bases. Most of these will be hit on subsequent days after the Taliban's air defence resources have been credibly destroyed. For these strikes the US will employ fighter ground-attack aircraft like the Warthog that will not only come screaming in to launch close range rocket attacks but also take pictures of the devastation that they cause so that people back home get to see that America is getting even.

The author is a former Senior Fellow at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi.

While the US and its allies will take care to avoid causing civilian casualties, considerable collateral damage may be expected to occur. The Afghans fleeing from their homes will run into the countless landmines that have been carelessly strewn over the countryside over two decades of bitter fighting. Depending on the ferocity of the air strikes, a



humanitarian disaster of huge proportions may be expected to unfold.

The initial air strikes will be multi-directional and will be launched from different types of weapons platforms. The three aircraft carrier battle groups (USS Enterprise, Theodore Roosevelt and Carl Vinson), deployed in the Persian Gulf and northern Arabian Sea, will employ F-18 Hornet fighter ground attack aircraft for ground strikes and F-14 Tomcats for air defence escorts. Early warning and control will be provided by E-2C Hawkeye AWACS aircraft. Besides nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, the battle groups comprise cruisers, destroyers, frigates, attack submarines and support ships.

British aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious and its sister ships are also likely to pitch in for the strikes with Sea Harrier jump jets. Most of these aircraft will have to overfly Pakistani airspace, as Iran is not willing to extend military cooperation to the US and allied forces. Tomahawk cruise missiles will again be used though not in very large numbers. Each Tomahawk costs about \$1 million.

TARGETS

US B-52 bombers from Diego Garcia, F-15 and F-16 fighter-bombers and British Tornados from air bases in Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar are likely to be utilised for delivering heavier payloads against larger targets such as air strips. If Saudi Arabia continues to deny the use of its air bases, long-range B-2 bombers from bases as far away as Turkey and Germany may also be employed to launch ground strikes, especially against targets in northern Afghanistan. In some cases, air-to-air refuelling may be necessary. Airbases have also been offered by Uzbekistan (near Tashkent and a Termez) and the Dushanbe military airbase of Tajikistan may also be made available.

Contrary to popular perceptions, the US is unlikely to risk using the Peshawar airfield in Pakistan for launching either air strikes or commando raids, as the area comprises mainly the Pushtun tribe that is known for its hostility and may be armed with Stinger SAMs. However, the Quetta, Sargodha and Bahawalpur airbases and other Pakistani airbases in

are likely to be used as launch pads for special forces operations. The USS Kitty Hawk, an aircraft carrier, is reported to have been modified to carry assault helicopters before being despatched to the scene of action from its Japanese base at Yokosuka. The aim can only be to reduce dependence on Pakistani airbases for launching heliborne operations in the Kandahar area.

While a large-scale ground invasion by the US and its allies can be ruled out, a number of surgical strikes will be launched by special forces to raid Osama bin Laden's hideouts and those of his associates. The US special forces commandos like the Delta Force and the Rangers and the British SAS will be dropped by air or inserted by helicopters close to the suspected hideouts. Most such operations will be of short duration (24 to 72 hours) and helicopters will again be employed to extricate the commandos. However, in all cases commando operations will be launched only after gaining accurate intelligence. In a few cases, long duration operations may be planned in which the commandos will be expected to melt into the countryside, live off the land, gain intelligence, build a network of sources, buy out the local warlords and prepare the ground for subsequent surgical strikes.

DAUNTING

Looking for Osama bin Laden and his unholy warriors in the numerous folds, ravines, valleys and caves of the rugged mountainous terrain of the Hindu Kush will prove to be a daunting venture. The winter that will arrive in early October will make the task even more hazardous and make the logistics effort considerably more complex. Eventually, the US and its allies may be left with no option but to establish a forward airhead as a launch pad for heliborne special forces operations. The Bagram air base north of Kabul would be ideal for the purpose.

As the Soviet Spetznas had discovered in the 1980s, special forces operations against the hardy Afghans in the terrain that they know so well will not be a piece of cake. Approximately 10 million landmines have been indiscriminately laid all over the Afghan countryside over the last three decades. The movement of special forces will be severely restricted as it will be limited to tracks which can be kept under surveillance by the Taliban militiamen and bin Laden's terrorists from vantage points of their choosing. Cross-country forays will result in heavy landmine casualties.

Euphemistically called "collateral damage", the unavoidable spillover of the air strikes into civilian areas will hurt the weakest sections of society the most. Thousands of refugees can be expected to begin streaming into the neighbouring countries. Even as the US and its allies pound selected targets repeatedly, their aircraft will be simultaneously engaged in air dropping food packets and other humanitarian aid to the hapless people. Osama bin Laden could not have posed a more complex and daunting challenge to the international community — except if he had used nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. He and his cohorts must be stopped from doing so in future.

THE STATESMAN

1 1 OCT 2001

Blackhawk after Tomahawks

Washington, Oct. 10 (Reuters): Signs of escalation in America's new war emerged today as the military prepared to use troop-carrying and attack helicopters to hunt down Osama bin Laden.

The stage was also set for "keyhole" satellites and reconnaissance aircraft to pursue bin Laden with the US declaring aerial supremacy over Afghanistan and President George W. Bush saying "no corner of the world will be dark enough" to hide the world's most wanted man.

The planning for the double-barrelled hunt emerged as US warplanes pounded Afghanistan for the fourth night in a row.

In Kabul, warplanes screamed across the night sky, bombs exploded in the heart of the city and the pounding of anti-aircraft guns rocked the capital in the heaviest bombardment since the strikes began.

Authorities in Kabul swiftly cut electricity, plunging the city into darkness. Huge blasts were heard in the north of the city, near the airport, and also to the east and south. At least two bombs later fell at or near the airport in the north of the shattered capital.

The Afghan Islamic Press said in Islamabad the strikes, which were launched through Tomahawk missiles, have killed 76 people since Sunday. US officials said several Taliban leaders have died.

US officials hinted at the possi-

bility of chopper missions but said low-flying strikes were not imminent while American attack jets continued round-the-clock "seek-and-destroy" missions.

Officials said UH-60 Blackhawk and other helicopters, including those designed for elite Special Operations troops, could be used with possible protection from AH-64 Apache attack helicopters.

The rocket and missile-packing Apaches could be vulnerable to fire from Taliban military forces and guerrillas aligned with bin Laden. Those forces are believed to still have shoulder-fired Stinger anti-aircraft missiles, previously supplied by the US to Afghan forces which used them against Soviet helicopters.

The New York Times said the helicopter strikes would be carried out from bases near — but not in — Afghanistan.

Defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld told reporters on Tuesday that US and British cruise missile and bombing strikes on Afghanistan had effectively destroyed Taliban air defence. Anti-aircraft guns continued to blaze in Kabul, but US officials said the bombers are flying out of range.

"Fixed-wing aircraft are continuing to look for targets of opportunity. If it moves, we will hit it," a defence official said today.

But officials refused to confirm or deny a report that the United States was also planning to

use army troops to occupy air bases in Afghanistan for operations against guerrillas.

The array of equipment at America's disposal for the hi-tech manhunt from the skies sounds as though it comes from a James Bond novel: planes that stay in the air for days, sensors that can track humans in caves, and satellites that take pictures from space.

Both America and Britain have an impressive choice of surveillance technology that can give a detailed picture of the hostile Afghan terrain.

Aerial reconnaissance is expected to guide Special Forces that, according to unconfirmed US media reports, entered Afghanistan soon after the September 11 attacks on America. Special Forces have access to surveillance equipment that can guide in air raids with pinpoint accuracy, the analysts said.

The US has "keyhole" satellites that can take pictures from space of astonishing clarity and, because they carry their own fuel, can be manoeuvred into the best orbit to look at Afghanistan.

Flight alarm

Escorted by US fighter jets, a Delta Airlines flight from Atlanta to Los Angeles was diverted to Louisiana late tonight after the pilot reported a disturbance in the cabin.

■ See Pages 4-8

US AXE HOVERS OVER JAISH

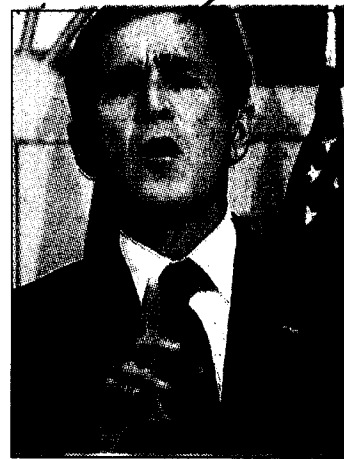
FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Oct. 10: As the second television war in a decade unfolds in drawing rooms, bars, salons and public places the world over, the bizarre unreality of the conflict is being brought home in New Delhi and Islamabad.

There is growing expectation here that the Bush administration will act against Jaish-e-Mohammed, which claimed responsibility for the recent suicide bomb attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, either before secretary of state Colin Powell travels to India or while he is in New Delhi.

There are two options before the administration: it can include Jaish in the state department's list of foreign terrorist organisations (FTOs) or its assets can be frozen.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 ►



DE: THE WAR AS IT UNFOLDS IN AFGHANISTAN ■

THE TELEGRAPH

Anthrax scare spreads from fear-centre Florida

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Oct. 9: As the US continued to pound Afghanistan with missiles for the third day, fear spread from coast to coast in America with the discovery that at least 1,000 persons could have been exposed to potentially deadly anthrax bacteria in Florida.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has taken over the inquiry after a colleague of a man who died from anthrax infection last week tested positive for the dangerous bacteria yesterday.

Anthrax infects the chest, resulting in haemorrhage and build-up of fluid in the lungs, leading to brain or lung damage and certain death. Its symptoms take two days to eight weeks to show and usually start with fever, cough and chest pain as in the case of flu. Anthrax is not contagious.

Officials here are not yet conclusively attributing the detection of anthrax bacteria in a newspaper office in Boca Raton, Florida, to criminal or terrorist activity.

John Ashcroft, US attorney-general, told reporters that "we do not have enough information to know whether this could be related to terrorism or not. Very frankly, we are unable to make a conclusive statement about the nature of this as either an attack or an occurrence."

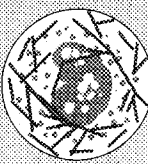
Ashcroft's statement was clearly intended to prevent fear in America from turning into panic, but there was clear evidence that the administration was taking no chances. It sealed the offices of the company, American Media Inc, which brings out several sleazy, but popular tabloids such as the *Globe*, *The National Enquirer* and the *Sun*, which have been publishing, as usual, wild, unsubstantiated and defamatory stories on Osama bin Laden in recent weeks.

As if in a bio-terrorist attack, the building was swarming with investigators in protective gear, gas masks and moon suits of the kind worn by astronauts.

Parked in the vicinity of the building were buses with blacked out windows, red and blue lights with antennae sticking out from their roofs and high-tech equipment inside.

Public health officials in Florida are rounding up anyone who worked in the building or visited the office after August 1 for tests with nasal swabs and precautionary antibiotics treatment. David Pecker, chief executive of Ameri-

ALL YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT ANTHRAX



WHAT IS ANTHRAX?

It is a haemorrhagic disease (leads to internal bleeding) caused by the anthracis bacteria. Can be contracted from soil or farm animals, particularly goats and sheep. Fatal in 95 per cent cases when ingested or inhaled and in 25 per cent cases when contracted through skin.

IS ANTHRAX CONTAGIOUS?
No. It is contracted by direct exposure to active spores.

HOW DO PEOPLE DEVELOP ANTHRAX?

Usually through contact with animals because the organism thrives on animal hair, wool and pelts. It enters the body through a cut on the skin, by ingesting contaminated meat or by breathing in spores.

IS THERE AN ANTHRAX VACCINE?
Yes, but it is available only to the military.

ARE THERE OTHER TREATMENTS?
Penicillin has long been used. Another antibiotic, ciprofloxacin hydrochloride, is also prescribed.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Initially, symptoms are non-specific and can be mistaken for flu. The patient has fever, fatigue, a cough and mild chest discomfort. As the infection spreads, haemorrhaging begins and vital functions shut down.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR THE SYMPTOMS TO SHOW UP?

As few as 12 hours or as long as 60 days. Usual incubation period is 1 to 7 days.



BOCA RATON FIRE RESCUE



An FBI agent prepares his bio hazard gear at American Media Inc. in Florida (Reuters)

WHY IS ANTHRAX ASSOCIATED WITH BIOTERRORISM?

The US made anthrax spores into weapons in the fifties and sixties. Scientists prodded the bacteria to release all water molecules from its cell, transforming it into a hard, tiny bead that withstands a wide range of temperature and weather conditions. In that form, anthrax can be sprayed.

Source: LAT-WP Graphic: RAJ

Sun eclipsed by killer bacteria

FROM SUSAN SCHMIDT

Washington, Oct. 9: American Media Inc — the company that publishes the *Globe*, the *Sun* and many of the nation's other supermarket tabloids from offices in Lantana, Florida — has been tougher than most of the nation's media on suspected terrorist Osama bin Laden.

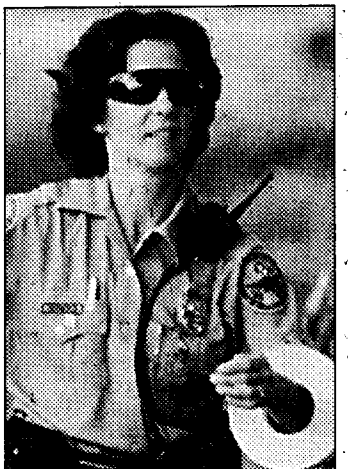
'Bin Laden the Butcher' was one of the headlines in this week's issue of the *Globe*, over a story that asserted that bin Laden is addicted to opium and is "a shameful hypocrite, condoning gang-rape, drinking and carousing by his military captains".

The October 2 issue of the *Globe* was more incendiary. In a story headlined 'The Face of Evil', a former CIA agent was quoted as saying bin Laden's rage toward Americans is rooted in being ridiculed by an American woman years ago for having underdeveloped sexual organs.

On Friday, extremely rare inhaled anthrax poisoning took the life of Bob Stevens, 63, photo editor of the *Sun*, whose offices are in the same building as the *Globe's*. Yesterday Florida health officials announced that a second *Sun* employee was contaminated with the anthrax bacteria and is being treated. Traces of the bacteria have been found on a company keyboard.

The *National Enquirer*, the *National Examiner*, the *Star* and the *Weekly World News*, all American Media publications, are located in the same building as the *Globe* and the *Sun*. Together, the publications claim some 25 million readers.

The *National Enquirer* has been as aggressive as the *Globe* in covering bin Laden. Its current issue contains an interview with a man named "Naseer" who said he fled a bin Laden terrorist training camp this summer. Naseer told the tabloid that commanders talked about a coming "blood-bath" in the US, and experimented with biological and chemical substances.



A policewoman strings crime scene tape around the perimeter of American Media Inc. (Reuters)

He said he left the camp after a friend who stole food from the commanders' compound bled to death after his hand was chopped off as punishment. "I was told to hate America," said Naseer. A previous issue of the *National Enquirer* contained a schematic drawing of bin Laden's mountain bunker.

American Media Chairman David Pecker said yesterday he doesn't think terrorists singled out his company because of its coverage of bin Laden. "Our investigating is nothing different than the mainstream," Pecker said. Some 300 employees of the tabloids were treated with antibiotics to stave off any further outbreak of the anthrax disease. Editors and reporters were sent to other American Media offices in Florida to meet their deadlines for this week.

Ironically, the *Sun* is the most innocuous of the tabloids, not even touching in this week's issue on the US campaign against bin Laden. Instead, it features the tale of a woman who lost 148 pounds with the help of "diet prayer," and "Bible Predictions for a New America."

LOS ANGELES TIMES-WASHINGTON POST NEWS SERVICE

Rapid but not ready

Within hours of learning on Sunday night that a second individual had been infected with anthrax bacteria, federal officials dipped into their pharmaceutical stockpile and flew 100 cases of antibiotics to Florida. The overnight shipment, orchestrated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, was part of a swift and far-reaching response to a disease outbreak that has some people on edge over the prospect of bioterrorism.

But Bush administration officials say the response, rather than cause for alarm, should reassure the public that authorities can handle any medical crisis, including a biological or chemical attack.

Medical experts praised the CDC's speedy response. But they said it would be a mistake to conclude that the US is ready for a severe flu epidemic, let alone a biological attack. Budget cuts in the medical industry, a lack of training, poor communications systems and disbelief that bioterrorism could strike in the US has produced a "fragmented" system for detecting and responding to a biological assault.

"We are underprepared," said Ken Alibek, a former Soviet scientist and president of Advanced Biosystems, a company that is developing new anthrax treatments. "Most doctors and nurses have never seen such cases. They have no idea how to diagnose these infections."

LAT-WP

can Media, said the number of such people could be over 1,000.

Investigations so far have detected the presence of anthrax on the computer keyboard of Robert Stevens, 63, photo editor of the *Sun*, who died last week.

Two of his colleagues have so far been found with the bacteria, although they have not been infected. This is in addition to the one who has tested positive.

Fears of a bio-terrorist attack have been fuelled because some of the men involved in the September 11 terrorist attacks lived within miles of the American Media's office. They had also taken flight lessons and tried to purchase a crop-dusting plane in the vicinity. The company's employee who has been tested positive, Ernesto Blanco, a 73-year-old mail supervisor, has been hospitalised with flu symptoms. His location is

being kept secret.

Suspicions have also been fuelled by a student intern in the company, said to be of Arab descent, who sent a letter to the staff at the end of his internship saying he had left something for people to remember him.

The authorities were also checking the building's ventilation system for any presence of the bacteria. All those who have been tested have been supplied with Ciprofloxacin antibiotics for 15 days to be continued, if needed, for another 45 days.

In Virginia, near here, one man who had visited the Florida office was also being tested for anthrax after he complained of flu symptoms. US health and human services secretary Tommy Thompson said there was no evidence of biological attack using anthrax, adds Reuters.

But President George Bush's brother and Florida Governor Jeb Bush said: "This is the new reality. We've talked about these biological and chemical agents being part of some terrorist arsenal and whether it is in this case or not, we have to be prepared for it. It needs to be a much higher priority than it has been in the past."

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer "it remains a situation of concern" but cautioned against jumping to conclusions.

"The federal government will continue to vigorously pursue any possible leads to make certain that all health considerations are fully addressed to the satisfaction of anybody who has concerns. It's important that that would be the posture. At the same time I want to note that it's not unusual at a time like this for false alarms to go off," Fleischer said.

Fighter jets in flight of safety

Chicago, Oct. 9 (Reuters): Military jets scrambled today to escort a commercial jetliner to a safe landing after passengers helped the crew subdue a mentally ill man who forced his way into the cockpit, authorities said.

Sonic booms set off by the two speeding military jets above Chicago's northern suburbs rattled nerves, though the incident aboard the American Airlines jet bound for Chicago from Los Angeles was not linked in any way to the September 11 hijacked-plane attacks on New York and Washington.

The FBI said that Edward Coburn, a 31-year-old resident of Fresno, California, with a history of mental illness, was subdued by a co-pilot and another crew member with the help of several passengers who had raced forward after him.

Coburn was to be charged today with obstructing a flight crew. He was traveling with his elderly father, who had alerted crew members before the incident that his son was acting strangely and could pose a problem, FBI spokesman Ross Rice said.

Witnesses on Flight 1238, which was carrying 153 passengers and nine crew members, said the man bolted toward the cockpit from the center of the plane and several male passengers chased him. They said the plane pitched violently left and right before the man was subdued.

"I saw the cockpit door open and the plane went to both sides. Then it levelled off and dropped a little bit. The pilot came on... and said he was requesting an emergency landing and someone had stormed the cockpit and they were in control," passenger Perry Rice said. Two military jets appeared alongside the Boeing 767's wings within minutes, witnesses said, and FBI agents met the plane after it landed. The airline said no one aboard was hurt.

US President George W. Bush has authorised two generals to give the order to shoot down a commercial airliner if it is deemed necessary in the wake of the deadly plane attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.



A bulldozer clears the rubble of the UN-funded demining agency in Kabul. (Reuters)

Missile cruises into UN office, kills four

Kabul, Oct. 9 (Reuters): Hundreds of mourners gathered on a dusty Kabul hillside this evening for the funeral of four Afghan guards from a UN-funded demining group killed by a pre-dawn US bomb strike.

The victims, all staff with Afghan Technical Consultancy (ATC), which runs demining operations in one of the world's most heavily mined countries, were buried side by side in a cemetery crammed with the graves of thousands of Afghans killed in 23 years of war. "They were good friends with each other and now they are buried next to each other as well," said a family member.

The ATC office was destroyed by a bomb dropped at 4.50 am by the last US plane on a pre-dawn sortie. "We were asleep and it was early morning when the building was hit. Four of my colleagues have been killed and I have a head wound," Mujaor, another ATC security guard, said.

Three others were also wounded. The UN issued an appeal to protect civilians.

"People need to distinguish between combatants and those innocent civilians who do not bear arms," UN Afghanistan coordinator Mike Sackett said in a statement. Local residents initially believed a missile hit the building, but Fazel Karim Fazel, director of the Oxfam-backed Organisation

for Mine Clearance and Afghan Rehabilitation (Omar), a parent body of ATC, said deminers identified the destruction as being caused by a bomb.

"(The dead men) were all sleeping in the room and they only found one leg from one of those four people," Fazel said.

In a meeting on September 28, all Afghan demining groups met to ensure their locations in Kabul were clearly identified on a map, and ATC believed it was safe from attack, he said.

"This map was provided by UNOCHA (UN Office for the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs) and... we had to confirm that our offices were marked in the right locations," Fazel said.

"It was my personal opinion that maybe this was coordinated to be on the safe side so that we would not be hit by any unexpected rockets or missiles," he added, saying he did not know if the information had been passed to Washington. Fazel said he had visited the US consul in to register his concerns. Two of the dead men were in their early 30s and married with children, while the other two were single and in their mid-20s. A visibly upset ATC official, Dr Shah Wali, said: "This is a civilian area and they have killed four of the guards of this building... They have missed their target." An ATC official based in

Pechawar said the destroyed office supervised demining activities in the provinces of Kabul, Wardak, Logar and Ghazni.

The building was in the Kabul suburb of Yaka Toot, and near a radio station that had been off the air for at least 10 years. Massive radio antennae and other derelict mobile communications equipment were still at that site.

Angry residents gathered this morning to watch a bulldozer clear the bomb site.

"We are already in a big mess. What else does the world want from us," said one. "Drop one atom bomb and annihilate us all instead of killing us gradually and justifying that with an operation against terrorists."

"Those who attack cannot cheat people for ever and must be ashamed for their acts of killing the poor Afghans," he added.

Bombs and missiles have rained down on Kabul and other major Afghan cities since Sunday as the US presses its war on terrorism to flush out Osama bin Laden and punish his Taliban protectors.

US officials have stressed that the attacks are aimed at military targets and sites linked to militant Osama bin Laden and his al Qaida network, prime suspects behind the devastating September 11 attacks on New York and Washington.

U-turn Bush looks beyond Laden

FROM STEVE HOLLAND

Washington, Oct. 9 (Reuters): After declaring he wanted Osama bin Laden "dead or alive," US President George W. Bush is trying to play down personalities in his war on terrorism even as the US military tries to capture or kill bin Laden.

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said Bush saw bin Laden's videotaped message on Sunday in which the Saudi-born fugitive called Bush "head of the international infidels" and all but took responsibility for the September 11 attacks.

"His reaction was first that this was much bigger than any one person, that this is not a war

against Osama bin Laden. This is a war against terrorists on multiple fronts," Fleischer said yesterday.

That represents a complete turnaround from the early days of the September 11 crisis. On September 17, Bush said, when asked about bin Laden during a visit to the Pentagon, that he was reminded of an Old West poster that read "Wanted: Dead or Alive."

In the last week or so, however, Bush has taken great pains to avoid singling out bin Laden by name, referring instead of his al Qaida network. He did not mention bin Laden in his speech on Sunday announcing military action had begun.

"It's not just Mr. bin Laden

that we expect to see brought to justice," Bush told reporters on September 28. "It's everybody associated with his organisation that's in Afghanistan."

"And not only those directly associated with Mr. bin Laden. Any terrorist that is housed and fed in Afghanistan needs to be handed over."

Still, with US warplanes hitting targets across Afghanistan, Fleischer said Bush still wanted bin Laden dead or alive. "There's been no change about how the president thinks about that matter," he told reporters.

The early rhetoric allowed Bush to frame an enemy, giving Americans a target for their anger over the September 11 attacks.

"There is no question he is what we would call a prime suspect. And if he thinks he can hide and run from the United States and our allies, he will be sorely mistaken," Bush said on September 15.

Bush's more recent language avoids having the mission's success or failure hinge on whether bin Laden is found.

And it serves to remind people that Bush's war involves not just military action but the freezing of financial assets as well as diplomatic attempts to isolate suspected terrorists.

"There is no shift, in emphasis," insisted National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice yesterday.

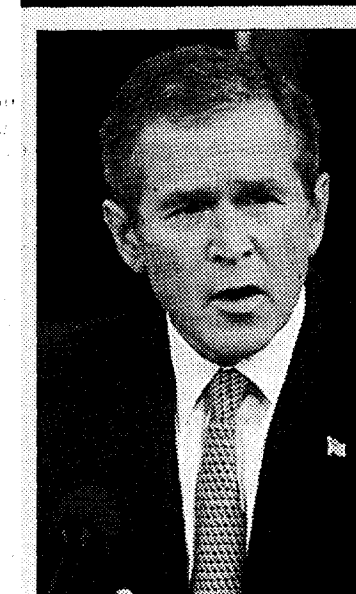
"The goal here is to root out the terrorists so that they cannot do the kinds of things that they did on September 11. And there are several facets to that, including bringing down the al Qaida network, and its leadership, and making certain that they can't do the kinds of things that they have been doing."

But there is no change," she said.

A US News and World Report poll released over the weekend said nearly three-quarters of Americans believe blocking future attacks is more important than slaying bin Laden.

Analysts said Bush seemed to have found the right emphasis in his remarks.

THEN AND NOW



I am reminded of an Old West poster that read 'Wanted: Dead or Alive' — September 17

It's not just Mr bin Laden that we expect to see brought to justice — September 28

READY FOR ROUND-THE-CLOCK RAIDS, SAYS RUMSFELD

U.S. planes pound Kabul, Herat

HD-1
10/10

KABUL, OCT. 9. Striking the Taliban on home ground, the U.S. warplanes pounded the area around the southern Afghan city of Kandahar on Tuesday night for the second time in 12 hours. The remote northwestern city of Herat was also hit hard.

The raids ushered in a third straight night of air strikes by a U.S.-led coalition seeking to punish Afghanistan's rulers for sheltering Osama bin Laden, believed to have masterminded the devastating attacks four weeks ago on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Raids the previous night in Kabul killed four civilians working for a U.N.-affiliated mine-clearing agency — the first confirmed civilian deaths of the air campaign. The four civilians were working as guards at the mine-clearing agency under contract to the U.N. whose offices were only 400 yards from a transmission tower hit in

the raids. In Kabul, the Taliban gunners opened up on Tuesday night with heavy burst of anti-aircraft fire and the roar of jets could be heard overhead.

The Afghan sources, contacted from Pakistan, said communications and air defences at the Kandahar airport had taken a beating. The sources said that the U.S. aircraft had been flying almost continual sorties over Kandahar during the day on Tuesday.

A Taliban soldier, reached by telephone at the Kandahar garrison after nightfall, said the Taliban gunners were trying to hit the attacking aircraft, but could not do as they were flying too high. PTI reports from Islamabad:

In the first skirmish since the U.S.-led military operations against Afghanistan, the Taliban troops today traded gunfire with the Pakistani border guards in the North-West Frontier Province, the Pakistan Home Minister, Mr.

Moinuddin Haider, said. The stand-off lasted for some time before the Taliban forces withdrew deeper into their own territories, Mr. Haider said.

First daylight attacks

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 9. In continuing its air raids over Afghanistan for the third day in a row, the U.S. jets took to the skies in the morning itself on Tuesday. It was the first daylight raid on Afghanistan and the targets were military facilities that included airfields, airplanes, anti-aircraft and missile sites.

Tuesday morning strikes are said to have involved some 15 aircraft mostly operating out of the USS Carl Vinson.

Briefing newsmen at the Pentagon today, the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, said the air strikes in the last two days had resulted in the U.S. going about the business "as we wish". Mr. Rumsfeld said, "With the success of previous raids, we believe we are now able to carry out strikes more or less round the clock, as we wish."

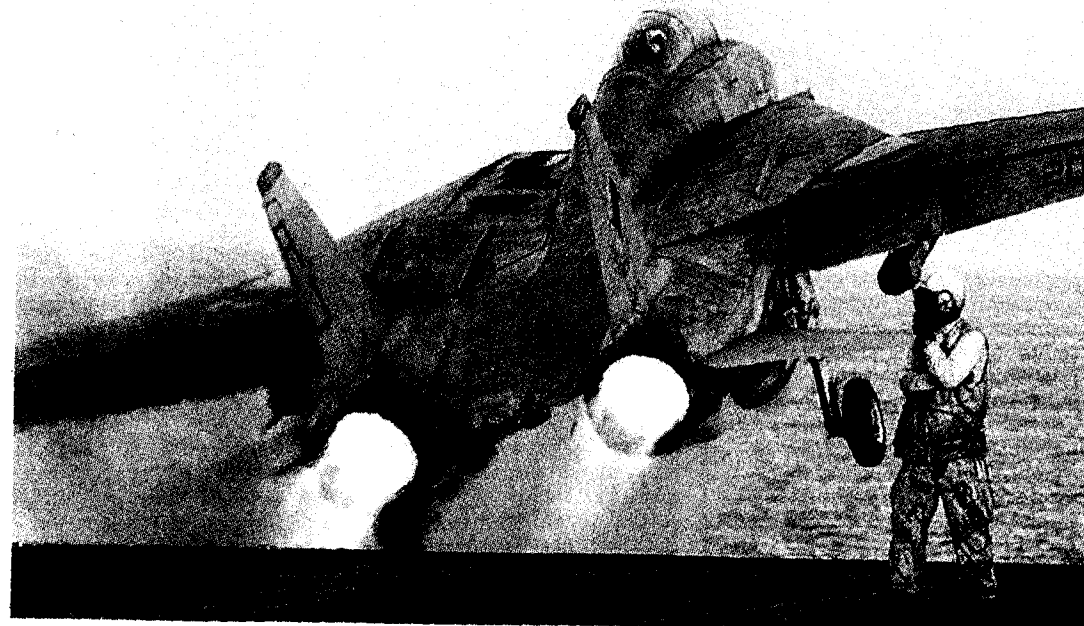
The Pentagon today showed mediapersons footage of hits on targets, one of which being a terrorist training camp which was seen levelled. Other sites were a missile site and the Shindand airfield.

In expressing regret for the loss of four workers of the U.N., Mr. Rumsfeld, however, noted that the Pentagon was not sure if they were victims of the strike from the air or from the ground.

It is believed in some quarters here that many members of the Al-Qaeda terrorist network are fleeing Afghanistan. Also there are unconfirmed reports here that the Taliban fighters are deserting in large numbers and that the Taliban officials are being challenged by some of the tribal chiefs in the northeast.

Mr. Rumsfeld downplayed the notion that the U.S. may be in and around Afghanistan in the same fashion as it has been around Iraq over the last decade. Maintaining that the two situations were different, he said, "Over time we have to drain the swamp."

The Pentagon said it was running short of targets in Afghan-



A U.S. F-14 fighter takes off from the main deck of the USS Enterprise early on Tuesday, as a second wave of U.S.-led airstrikes on Afghanistan was launched. — AFP

istan, but at the same time some of the targets would have to be re-visited after the initial evaluation from the air.

The Bush administration is also reminding the domestic and the international audience that there is another dimension to what is taking place in Afghanistan — the food and medicine air drops which are continued for the second day and expected to last many more days. Asked why this humanitarian assistance could not be larger, the Defence Secretary said that the preferred supply route was not from the air, but from ground.

The Pentagon and the White House are studying the damage assessment of the bombing runs. For operational reasons and on instructions of utmost confidentiality, the administration has released very little information on what the air strikes have achieved thus far.

Politically, the Bush administration is trying to impress that several nations and leaders of West Asia are behind the U.S. This

after a noticeable perception that much of the support that the administration is boasting about is only from the Western nations. Not a single Arab nation or leader has offered support to the air strikes.

Omar's compound hit

It is now confirmed that the residential compound of the Taliban chief Mullah Mohammad Omar in Kandahar was indeed a target and was struck in Operation Enduring Freedom. The Pentagon said that Mullah Omar's compound was a command and control centre and hence a target. Reports from Kabul are that Mullah Omar left the compound 15 minutes earlier.

Indications are that the U.S. will be hitting targets deep inside Afghanistan perhaps for a day or two more after which there will be a pause. The pause will be used to study the targets that have been hit and the ones that needed to be hit. This period will also be used for sending in more of the Special Forces from neighbouring coun-

tries. Administration officials have flatly rejected suggestions that the U.S. is thinking of sending large contingents of ground forces for any "occupation" of Afghanistan. The general impression here is that the U.S. and British jets and bombers are softening the ground so that the Northern Alliance could start a new front against the Taliban.

The initial military objective is two fold: to weaken the defence of the Taliban and to facilitate the free movement of the special forces inside Afghanistan to try and catch Osama bin Laden and his top lieutenants. Unnamed Pentagon officials have been quoted in the media as saying that for the time being the immediate objective was not to nab Osama bin Laden.

The Pentagon is working on a list of known Osama bin Laden hideouts and terror training camps of the Al-Qaeda. In the realm of intelligence sharing, there has been a lot of cooperation from Pakistan.



Afghans search for bodies in the debris of the office of the Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC), an NGO in Kabul on Tuesday. — AFP

Powell on ally hunt to India

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DAMIAN WHITWORTH
THE TIMES, LONDON

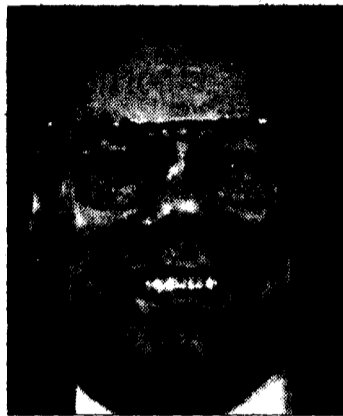
WASHINGTON, Oct. 9. - The US secretary of state, Mr Colin Powell, will seek to shore up one of the most fragile parts of the coalition against terrorism in a trip to India and Pakistan this week.

President Mr George W Bush asked Mr Powell to visit the two wary neighbours in order to "keep working with them on coalition efforts", according to a State Department official.

With Pakistan's agreement to back the attacks on Afghanistan proving unpopular with fundamentalist Muslims at home, and with India unhappy at America's decision to deal with Pakistan at all, the Bush administration is anxious to carefully nurture relations with both countries.

Pakistan has granted the USA and the Britain permission to fly over the country to launch strikes against the Taliban and al-Qaida.

India has also offered help and cast doubt on the wisdom of Washington working with



Gen. Colin Powell

President Gen Pervez Musharraf's regime, saying that it's a part of the problem, not the solution to the threat posed by Osama bin Laden. The two nuclear powers are in a state of constant tension over the divided territory of Kashmir.

The State Department official said Mr Powell had "been very careful all along to manage our relationships with India or Pakistan so we don't see any tensions arising over this. Each of them has strongly supported

the coalition. Obviously each of these countries will support it in a slightly different way, so we want to work with both of them and not allow any problems to arise."

Mr Powell, who has been conducting round-the-clock telephone diplomacy in the hours before and after the military operation began, was praised by Mr Bush on Monday. "We've worked aggressively on the diplomatic front developing a broad and strong coalition of countries who are united with us and involved in our campaign, and Mr Powell and his team have done a remarkable job of rallying the lovers of freedom to our side," the President said.

Mr Powell has called leaders around the world to explain the thinking behind the attacks and gauge the reaction. An official said: "The basic message to everybody is that we've initiated this military action and we're being very careful to try not to hit any civilians. The military targets are - al-Qaida training camps and the Taliban military infrastructure."

THE STATESMAN

10 OCT 2001

Spectre of bio-terrorism haunts USA

MARTIN FLETCHER
THE TIMES, LONDON

WASHINGTON, Oct. 9. - The FBI is investigating at an emergency level whether USA has come under biological attack after more anthrax bacteria were found in Florida, three days after a British-born man died of the disease.

The White House has also expressed concern, and backed away from assurances offered by the health secretary, Mr Tommy Thompson, that the death of a picture editor with the *Sun* supermarket tabloid, Bob Stevens (63), was an isolated case and had nothing to do with terrorism.

The Florida Governor, Mr Jeb Bush, has also acknowledged the possibility that bioterrorism could be responsible and said the FBI was treating the case "very, very seriously".

The US Attorney General, Mr John Ashcroft, said the FBI might find itself involved in a clear criminal investigation. A senior law enforcement official said: "This kind of situation points to terrorism or criminal intent because it's so rare to have two people working in the same building who have inhaled anthrax bacteria."



FBI agents and a special investigation unit use a dolly to move a drum at American Media Inc. in Boca Raton in Florida on Tuesday. FBI closed down the company office on Monday after an employee contracted the anthrax virus. - AP/PTI

The medical correspondent of the *Palm Beach Post*, Mr Sanjay Bhatt, said there was "a quiet sense of dread. People are trying to stay calm but as each day passes the story only seems to get worse."

FBI Agents sealed off an office building

in Boca Raton and experts from the Centres for Disease Control in Atlanta moved in. They were urgently testing the 300 people who worked there, after anthrax spores were discovered on the victim's keyboard and in a colleague's nose.

Health experts could think of no previous case of anthrax spores being found inside a building, and the office is close to places where several of the terrorists involved in the 11 September attacks had lived, practiced flying and inquired about crop-duster planes.

Mr Stevens was originally believed to have died after inhaling anthrax spores from a natural source such as farm animals or soil. He was a keen on the outdoors, and had recently visited North Carolina where he had drunk from a creek. That theory gained credence when health officials found the strain of anthrax that killed him was not resistant to penicillin as some genetically-engineered strains would have been.

But that theory was dashed yesterday when it emerged that anthrax spores had been discovered in the nasal passages of a 73-year-old man who worked in the mail room of American Media, publishers of the *Sun* and *National Enquirer* tabloids. The man was taken to the intensive care unit of a Miami hospital with pneumonia-like symptoms last week, released, then readmitted at the weekend and tested.

THE STATESMAN

10 OCT 2001

U.S. to release expanded list of terrorist outfits

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 9. The U.S. is expected to release an expanded list of terrorist organisations this week and indications are that the President, Mr. George W. Bush, will add at least one outfit operating in Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. Bush apparently gave this impression in his call to Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee over the weekend while informing him ahead of the impending moves on Afghanistan. Senior Indian officials visiting Washington have been trying to impress upon the Bush administration that terrorism cannot be seen through the prism of Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden alone.

What Indian diplomats and officials have been trying to say to the Bush administration is that terrorist outfits operating in Jammu and Kashmir, openly supported by Pakistan, have links to Osama and company. The fact that outfits such as the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) would take immediate credit for the gruesome car bomb attack in Srinagar was taken note of here.

Washington is quite aware of the antecedents of the JeM. For quite some time now, New Delhi has been impressing the U.S. upon the need to crack down on groups such as the Lashkar-e-

Taiba and Al-Badr, both of which are active in Jammu and Kashmir. In fact, over the last four years, there has been keen interest on whether or not Washington will add any of these groups in the "list" of Foreign Terrorist Organisations of the State Department.

Last week, the State Department came out with its "list" of Foreign Terrorist Organisations. Instead of any additions, two were actually taken off the list — the Japanese Red Army and the Tupac Amaru of Peru.

There was noticeable disappointment — perhaps even anger — here and elsewhere that Washington had once again failed to take note of terrorist outfits (with state sponsors) operating in Jammu and Kashmir.

The White House list of organisations, entities and individuals is different and meant to complement the list of the State Department. The first list of Mr. Bush named 27 entities and organisations and were all Al-Qaeda specific. Several outfits such as the Hamas and the Hizbollah had been left out. The explanation then was that the focus was on "global reach".

While much of the exercise is terrorism specific, there is also a political component — the Bush administration finds itself com-

pelled to address the genuine concerns of countries like India. In fact, terrorism will be high on the agenda when the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, visits Pakistan and India this weekend. Gen. Powell has several objectives in his trip to South Asia.

He is also travelling to the sub-continent calling for restraint and one of the prime objectives is to assure Islamabad that it will not be coming under attack from India when the focus is on Afghanistan.

"The Pakistanis have always worried, when they get diverted or consumed by one thing, about the Indians jumping in to take advantage," an unnamed senior administration official has been quoted in *The Washington Post*. According to the report, New Delhi has both publicly and privately assured that Pakistan's situation will not be exploited.

That said there is also visible anger in India about the October 2 car bomb attack in Srinagar. "The Indians are more than a little ticked off," the senior official has said; and one of the ways that the Bush administration is going to address Indian concerns is to add a militant group to the President's list. "The message to India is not only restraint. It's also: We hear you on terrorism," an official

has been quoted.

Also, Gen. Powell will seek to reassure that in spite of the recent attention to Pakistan, the U.S. is committed to the long-term improvement of relations with India.

"We need to make it clear to India that they are important in the current coalition and we remain committed to the long-term improvement of relations with India," a State Department official has said.

'Six Japanese planes allowed to refuel'

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, OCT. 9. The External Affairs Ministry today clarified that India had allowed six Japanese C-130 planes, carrying relief supplies to Pakistan to land and refuel in New Delhi and Kolkata, on Monday.

The aircraft were expected to return on Wednesday before taking off for Thailand. They belonged to the Japanese Self-Defence Forces and had transported tents, plastic sheets, blankets, sleeping mats and water containers for the Afghan refugee camps.

INDIA

Colin Powell's visit

By Chinmaya R. Gharekhan

110-12

WHAT IS the purpose behind the visit of the American Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, to India and Pakistan at this stage? Is it merely to express the appreciation of his Government for the support extended by these two countries in the war against terrorism? Or, is it something more?

In Pakistan, Gen. Powell will convey the profound gratitude of the Administration as well as the people of the United States for the vital support extended by Pakistan in the war against Osama bin Laden and the Taliban, not just in the form of logistics, intelligence sharing and use of air space, but, equally importantly, in the diplomatic game by sending delegations to Kandahar to talk to the leaders of the Taliban in an apparent effort to persuade them to agree to the demands of the American President, Mr. George W. Bush. That politico-diplomatic exercise was of great significance for Mr. Bush since it bought him time not only to deploy and position his forces but also to demonstrate to the Islamic world as well to his own people that he was being responsible and reasonable. Those two weeks enabled him also to put together a coalition of some 40 countries in what is undoubtedly a crucial war against terrorism.

Pakistan used the time to develop a framework of policy which would take care of the superpower's demands and, at the same time, protect and further its national interests in all fields, not excluding military. As it happens, the international community, including India, might have exaggerated the domestic difficulties of Pakistan's ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, and this suited him just fine. Once Pakistan came to the conclusion that its interests dictated total identification with the American objectives, it did not stop at anything. It even abandoned the Taliban, its own creation, stopped hostility towards the Northern Alliance and embraced the idea of King Zahir Shah playing an important role in post-Taliban Afghanistan, thereby ensuring an effective voice for itself in government-forma-

10) 10 **India ought not to react out of pique at the over-generous manner in which the Americans are repaying Pakistan for what they perceive as crucial help.** We (W)

tion. Indeed, Gen. Musharraf has already received assurances in that regard from America. Thus the Americans have much to be grateful for to Pakistan. We, in India, would believe that Pakistan has received much more in return but that would be our perception which might not be shared by the other party to that equation.

In India, Gen. Powell would certainly thank the Government for its offer of cooperation — an offer which, for the most part, has remained unutilised simply because the U.S. did not feel the need to use our air space or our airfields in the military campaign. He will try to reassure us about the renewed military relationship between his country and Pakistan, asking us not to attach undue importance to it or to read too much into it. He will reiterate previous statements about the U.S. being determined to deal with other terrorism once Osama bin Laden and company are dealt with.

He will surely tell our leaders that the U.S. has not made any commitment to Pakistan about Kashmir. He will once again condemn the terrorist attack on the Assembly complex on October 1. By time he comes to Delhi, Jaish-e-Mohammad might have declared a terrorist organisation. He would repeat his Government's position, namely, that the solution of the Kashmir dispute must be arrived at by Pakistan and India, taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people. All these statements and reassurances will be important; their significance should not be minimised.

Will there be something else on Gen. Powell's mind? One cannot exclude the possibility of his indicating the willingness of the U.S. to be ready to help restart the dialogue between India and Pakistan,

and to be helpful in initiating some kind of a substantive discussion of the Kashmir problem. Mr. Bush, in his remarks soon after Gen. Musharraf's televised address of September 19, had suggested that the new situation created in the aftermath of the September 11 events might offer an opportunity for improved India-Pakistan atmosphere. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, did write to Mr. Bush, asking him to convey a message to Pakistan that India's patience was not unlimited and, no doubt, the latter did transmit an appropriate message to the General.

Encouraged by Mr. Vajpayee's approach, which was dictated by the murderous attack on the Assembly complex in Srinagar, Mr. Bush might be tempted to at least throw feelers about a possible U.S. role in the Kashmir imbroglio. Gen. Musharraf, whose international standing has shot up in recent weeks, would be portrayed as a very reasonable man with whom it would be possible to negotiate in a restrained, polemic-free atmosphere. By renewing a multi-faceted relationship with Pakistan, the U.S. would claim to have regained as well its influence with it which can only be for the good of Indo-Pakistan relations.

There is no denying the fact that the relations between India and Pakistan, already strained after Agra, have become more tense in recent days. The emotional outburst of the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, following the Assembly massacre and his public call for attacking the terrorist training camps across the Line of Control is an accurate indication of the mood in the State, widely shared in the rest of the country. One can, therefore, understand if the Americans, and the international community

as a whole, feel concerned at the heightened tension between the two nuclear neighbours.

The politics in our country might not permit it, but we ought to devise a response, if indeed Gen. Powell has any such thing on his agenda, which, without amounting to an acceptance of any mediation, would not slam the door for some form of creative diplomacy to be deployed in future. After all, even Nehru had accepted American mediation way back in 1962 on the very same Kashmir issue in the wake of our war with China. True, India was much weaker then, militarily and economically. Also, the coalition government of today does not enjoy the kind of confidence that Nehru enjoyed even after the debacle of 1962.

Nonetheless, Mr. Vajpayee has shown, by his actions, that he is not afraid to take politically difficult decisions. He has also said, in his "Musings from Kumarakom", that he was determined to look for a solution to the Kashmir problem and that, in that search, he would not hesitate to try new approaches. If the U.S. can satisfy us on the question of our terrorism, if not fully, then at least to some extent, it might create an atmosphere wherein our people and politicians might be willing to countenance some American role in the Kashmir question.

In any case, we ought not to react out of pique at the over-generous manner in which the Americans are repaying Pakistan for what they perceive as the crucial help they have received in their war against Osama bin Laden and the Taliban. It would be ironic if the triangular equation involving the U.S., India and Pakistan were to change, with Pakistan enjoying warm relations and India feeling frustrated and bitter towards the U.S. The only country which would welcome such a denouement, though it would deny it, would be Pakistan.

(The writer is a former Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations and U.N. Special Coordinator in Gaza.)

U.S. calms Pak nerves, says India won't attack

Powell visit aimed at shoring up Pak government's morale *Mazar-e-Sharif main target of Northern Alliance*

By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: The United States is reassuring a jumpy Pakistan that India will not take advantage of Islamabad's precarious position to launch an attack on it. The Bush administration has been in almost daily contact with the two sides to calm Pakistani nerves and Indian edginess at what it perceives as U.S. coddling of Pakistan. Fears that New Delhi will use the current crisis and Pakistan's deepening vulnerability to settle the problem of terrorism afflicting India has been haunting Islamabad since the crisis erupted nearly a month ago.

The anxiety, which U.S. officials say has no basis, led Pakistan's military ruler Pervez Musharraf to ask India to 'lay off' and make veiled threats despite New Delhi's assurance that it has no intention of taking advantage of the situation and make Pakistan's difficult position even harder. Administration officials acknowledge India has made public statements to this effect and also given Washington private assurances, but that does not appear to have calmed Pakistan. Secretary of State Colin Powell's visit to the region later this week is aimed at shoring up Pakistan's shaky military regime and boost the morale of a country that finds itself in a terrible crisis.

However, India has used the opportunity to make a strong case about the all-round ill-effects of Pakistan using terrorism as a state policy, leading to a significant re-orientation on the issue both in Washington and Islamabad. The Bush administration has now signaled that India has a legitimate grievance, and the resulting pressure on Pakistan has led to various steps, including Gen. Musharraf's phone call to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee on Monday, in which the Pakistani leader for the first time acknowledged a massacre in Kashmir as terrorism.

The military regime has also cracked down on fundamentalist leaders preaching violence and effected crucial changes in the administration aimed at weeding out hardline elements. In Washington, the Bush administration has repeated the pledge that its fight against terrorism will not stop with the ouster of the Taliban regime or the death of Osama bin Laden. President Bush's assurance to Mr Vajpayee that Washington was actively working on adding Jaish-e-Mohammed to list of terrorist outfits is evidently just the first step in addressing India's concerns.

By Manoj Joshi
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Taliban air defence forces commander Mullah Mohammed Akhnur was killed some days ago on the northern front near the city of Mazar-e-Sharif, senior government sources here said. A senior official said that in the next few days, a number of provinces were likely to fall into the hands of the Northern Alliance.

"According to our reports, the coordination between the U.S. and the Northern Alliance has become much better and the second day's strikes have been much more effective in the north," he said.

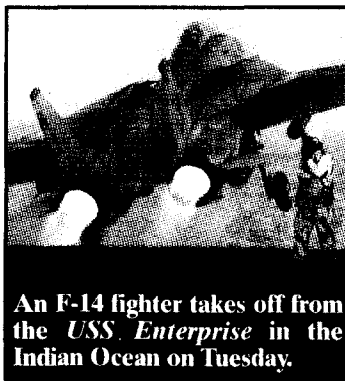
According to available information, it appears that once the U.S. forces suppress Taliban's air defence systems across Afghanistan, they will concentrate on the frontline forces facing the Northern Alliance.

The official said that India was in daily touch with Northern Alliance leaders and now had a clear idea of the progress of the anti-Taliban operations being conducted by them. "The Alliance does not plan to capture Kabul, but to allow it to fall like a ripe fruit after the Taliban faces the combined pressure of the U.S. and the Alliance forces in the coming days."

The primary target, the official said, would be Mazar-e-Sharif and the Alliance had already interdicted the Kabul-Mazar-e-Sharif road in the Baghlan province, compelling the Taliban to use the lengthy Kandahar-Heart-Mazar road to ferry supplies to their forward troops.

Officials said Pakistani advisers, mainly seconded military personnel, were still with the Taliban forces in this area. "This is to shore up Pakistani policy, enunciated by President Pervez Musharraf in his Monday press conference, of checking the Northern Alliance."

Officials said that while it may be premature to talk of a post-Taliban scenario, there were informal consultations and ideas that were being discussed. "Our approach is that the post-Taliban settlement should be 'process based', rather than focused on individual," a senior government official said. He said the information was that former King Zahir Shah could play a role, not so much as to restore the monarchy, but to provide a transitional government to the war-torn country.



An F-14 fighter takes off from the USS Enterprise in the Indian Ocean on Tuesday.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

10 OCT 2001

10 OCT 2001

Jakarta, Baghdad erupt in anger

REUTERS

JAKARTA/BAGHDAD, Oct. 9. — Indonesian police fired warning shots, lobbed tear-gas shells and used water-cannon during a clash with about 400 Muslim protesters outside the US embassy in Jakarta today, suggesting the government was in the mood to clamp down firmly on anti-US violence.

But the scene was different in Baghdad, where thousands of angry demonstrators marched through the streets in protest against the US strikes. "Down, down America", tens of thousands of demonstrators chanted as they moved through the heart of the city.

The demonstrators, many waving Iraqi and Palestinian flags and carrying posters of President Saddam Hussein, shouted slogans urging a fullscale war for Palestine.

In Jakarta, police took their first tough action against what has till now been sporadic protests against the US action after demonstrators tried to pull down the barbed wire fence in front of the American embassy around noon. The protesters dispersed after warning shots were fired. Some returned later to be joined by other small groups, all of whom left after dark. The protesters had earlier rallied in front of the UN office in Jakarta.

Witnesses said two policemen and a protester were hurt, largely by rocks pelted during the scuffle. In Surabaya and Makassar, Muslim demonstrators burned effigies of Mr George W Bush.

The US embassy in Jakarta, which has become a target for protests by radical Muslim groups in this country with the world's largest Islamic population, has been closed.

Few in Indonesia support the radicals threatening violence against Americans and foreign assets, though many oppose the strikes on Afghanistan.

The President, Mrs Megawati Sukarnoputri, has been given a deadline till Thursday by the small but vocal Islamic Defenders' Front to sever ties with Washington. They have threatened to expel Americans and other foreigners and destroy foreign assets if the deadline is not met. Analysts doubt if the threat will be carried out after police warned of harsh reprisals.

THE STATESMAN

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WAR AGAINST TERRORISM WILL GO BEYOND AFGHANISTAN, U.S. TELLS U.N.

New wave of air strikes hit Kabul, Kandahar

KABUL, OCT. 8. Heavy bursts of anti-aircraft fire ripped the night sky over Kabul on Monday, heralding a second night of U.S. attacks aimed at the Taliban Government in Afghanistan and the accused terrorist mastermind, Osama bin Laden. As the new bombardment began, the Taliban insisted previous strikes had missed their mark.

Targets in Monday's raids included areas around the capital, the Taliban's home base of Kandahar, and Afghanistan's north, where an opposition rebel alliance is battling the Taliban.

At least three bombs fell on Monday night in the Kabul area — one each to the north, west and east of the city. The targets were unclear, but the airport is to the city's north, a TV transmission tower to the west and an abandoned fort in the east.

Taliban gunners responded to the latest barrage with sustained anti-aircraft fire. One high-flying plane could be seen dropping flares before the detonations. Power was cut in the capital, and Taliban radio ordered people to close their blinds, shut off the lights and stay indoors.

Other strikes hit the Taliban stronghold of Kandahar, a Taliban official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Taliban positions around the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif were also under attack by aircraft and mis-

siles, a spokesman for the opposition Northern Alliance, Mr. Ashraf Nadim, said by telephone from northern Samangan province.

British forces participated in the initial bombardment, but not Monday's, defence officials in London said.

The Taliban radio on Monday derided the previous night's strikes as a failure. "The American bombardment and rocket attacks didn't hit their targets," it said.

The U.S.-led forces attacked the airport at Jalalabad for the second night running, the Afghan Islamic Press reported from Islamabad. The attack targeted the airport but we have no details, the Pakistan-based news agency quoted a Taliban official as saying. — AP, AFP

Raining bombs, dropping food supplies

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 8. The U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, today said there was a lot of work left to be done. "We believe we have made progress toward eliminating air defence sites. We believe we have made an impact on military fields," Mr. Rumsfeld said during a briefing a Pentagon briefing. The air dropping of food and essential suppli-

es in Afghanistan is going on well.

Senior officials at the Defence Department are also saying that the Round Two was targeting sites primarily in the Taliban stronghold of Kandahar. This would undoubtedly go a long way in assisting the forces of the Northern Alliance.

Day Two of the all-American operation has seen the participation of fewer planes and jet fighters. As many as 10 B-1s and B-2s were involved in the conventional bombing runs; and 10 jet fighters are coming out of the Carrier battle groups. But the use of fewer jets does mean a drop in the level of intensity of the attacks. The U.S. is keen, among other things, to wipe out the military machine of the Taliban militia.

Separately, the Bush administration formally notified the United Nations Security Council that the U.S. at some point in the future would expand the military operations beyond Afghanistan. A legal document was sent to the Council on Sunday calling the attack on Afghanistan an act of self-defence under the U.N. Charter and also reserving the right to move and look beyond Afghanistan.

The campaign against terrorism will be a relentless one, the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, said noting he has been assured the military mission of the first day was executed as planned.

"On all efforts, on all fronts we are going to be ongoing and relentless as we tighten the net of justice," against the terrorists, he said. Mr. Bush also referred to the fact that more than 37,000 kits were airdropped for the people of Afghanistan and that this was an important part of a war under way.

The President was making formal remarks at the White House prior to the swearing in of the new Director of Homeland Security, Mr. Tom Ridge. The new Cabinet position will oversee more than 40 agencies which are in one way or another responsible for responding or preventing terrorist attacks.

Mr. Bush said the best offensive against terrorism was the global offensive; and that the first shot in this campaign was fired not on Sunday but several days ago when steps were taken to choke the financial pipeline of the terror networks. He also referred to the diplomatic offensive against terrorism.

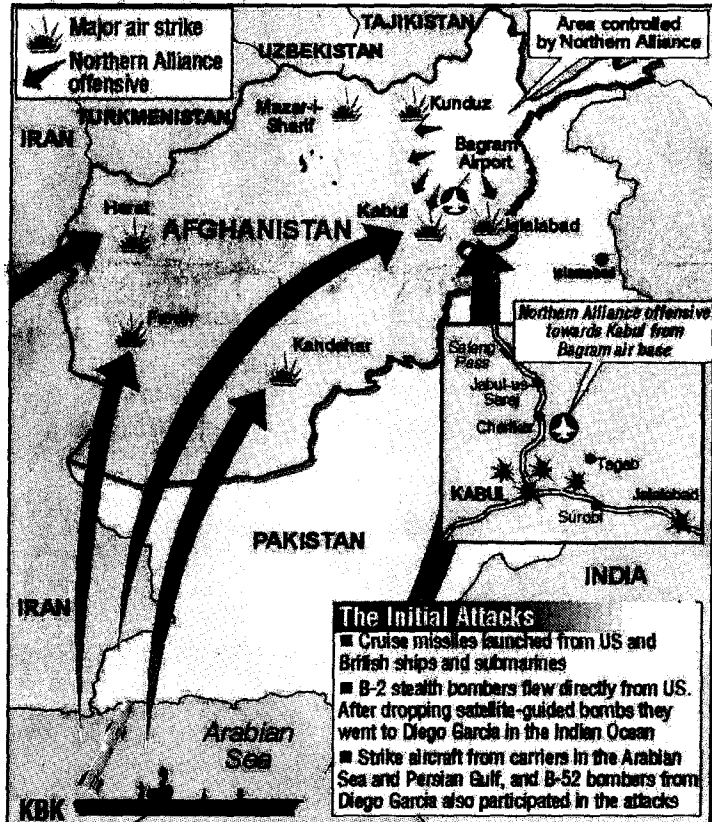
The U.S. said its strikes against Afghanistan would continue for several more days; and the Pentagon is saying the first hits against some 30 sites is more than satisfactory. The Pentagon is maintaining that more intensive strikes lasting for several days are on the cards. The first wave of attacks



Afghans clearing the debris of a destroyed home on Monday after the previous night's missile strikes on Kabul. — AP

TALIBAN UNDER ATTACK

The US and British forces started air strikes on Afghanistan on Sunday night. The priority of the initial attacks is to eliminate Taliban's air defences. The targets included radars, missile sites, airfields, aircraft, military command & control installations and terrorist camps.



was confined to between two and three dozen sites.

Earlier in the morning, Mr. Rumsfeld, while not getting into the specifics of the operations by the British and American forces, said, "We feel that thus far this has been a very successful effort". He said the first targets included terrorist training camps, airfields, military aircraft and air defence radars.

Mr. Rumsfeld brushed aside the

Taliban militia claim of having shot down U.S. jets. Reports coming from Afghanistan also speak of the Taliban claiming that a U.S. helicopter carrying 14 soldiers had been brought down. This, too, has been dismissed here. There has also been the accusation that the initial strikes were targeted on civilian areas.

"The targets were carefully selected. They tended to be in remote areas and they were all very

low collateral damage targets," the Defence Secretary said.

The clear impression is that the U.S. and Britain will continue targeting specific installations and terror camps; and the Pentagon is hinting that the strikes will intensify in such areas as Kabul and Kandahar. What has been taken note of is the fact that the compound of the house of the Taliban supremo, Mullah Mohammad Omar, has been targeted and the

belief is that the Taliban leader fled the area.

More than 15 land-based bombers, including the Stealth B-2s out of Missouri and 25 strike jets from the Carrier battle groups, joined in the strikes. British and American surface ships and submarines unleashed 50 Cruise missiles. The attacking forces have used both precision-guided weapons and non-precision bombs.

Taliban vows to fight back

ISLAMABAD, OCT. 8. An emergency session of the Taliban Cabinet resolved today to fight back the U.S.-led forces and ruled out any change in the militia's policy of protecting the alleged terrorist mastermind, Osama bin Laden.

"We have decided to fight hard the attacks by the Americans and Britain," the Afghan Islamic Press quoted a Taliban spokesman as saying.

"We have discussed our military and political strategy and have taken several decisions on the military front. We have reinforced our military positions and have decid-

ed to deploy soldiers at some important places. "We have also worked out a strategy for fighting. We will fight the Americans the way we fought the Russians," the spokesman said, referring to the 1979-89 Soviet occupation.

He said negotiations were the only way the hardline Islamic militia could be convinced to hand over Osama, blamed for the strikes in New York and Washington last month. "There is no change in our policy regarding

Osama bin Laden and we have always believed in negotiations."

The Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Abdul Salam Zaeef, today warned the U.S. of "severe consequences" for the military strikes in Afghanistan and claimed that at least one American aircraft was shot down during last night's attacks which killed about 30 civilians, including women and children. "To the best of my knowledge the consequences are very severe and they are so severe

that no one can determine it," Mr. Zaeef told reporters here.

He also said Osama was safe inside Afghanistan though there had been no direct contacts with him. "Yes he is alive. He is safe inside Afghanistan." Contesting U.S. claims that the strikes were only on terrorist camps and military installations, Mr. Zaeef said the rockets had hit civilian houses. "There was no differentiation between the civilian part and the military part." — AFP, PTI

Russia restrained over U.S. strikes

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, OCT. 8. Russia has voiced measured support for the U.S. strikes in Afghanistan, urging restraint and concerted international action in fighting terrorism.

Describing the strikes as "expected", the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, voiced confidence that the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, and his Ministers "will do their best to prevent Afghan civilians from being harmed".

Mr. Putin said the organisers of the September 11 terrorist attacks in the U.S. had made "a mistake," hoping to play different centres of world power against each other, as they did in the past. The terrorists had "not expected that mankind would close ranks in the face of the common enemy," he said.

At the same time Mr. Putin said that Russia's limited participation in the U.S.-led war against terror "would remain unchanged". Moscow refused to open its military facilities to the U.S., but agreed to share information on terrorist organisations and provide air corridors for humanitarian flights. It also pledged military assistance to the anti-Taliban forces and promised to take part in search-and-rescue operations on Afghan territory. Mr. Putin also said Russia would expand its "large-scale humanitarian aid for the people of Afghanistan".

A statement issued by the Russian Foreign Ministry said "the time has come" to fight terrorism "with all available means in keeping with the U.N. Charter".

"Wherever they may be, in Afghanistan, in Chechnya, in the Middle-East or in the Balkans, terrorists must know that justice will reach them," the statement said. However, the Russian Foreign Ministry failed to explicitly welcome the U.S. bombing strikes in Afghanistan.

The Interfax news agency reported on Monday that Russia had begun to deliver weapons to the anti-Taliban forces of the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan. Moscow said it would provide a total of \$45 million worth of arms to the anti-Taliban forces, including Soviet-era T-55 tanks, armoured vehicles, Kalashnikov rifles and other small arms. Meanwhile, security has been stepped up in the Russian capital, with Interior Ministry troops deployed to guard key installations and offices, including Western embassies.

U.N. Security Council seat for Syria

UNITED NATIONS, OCT. 8. Syria won a seat on the U.N. Security Council today with overwhelming support from the nations of the world, despite being on the U.S. list of countries sponsoring terrorism. The General Assembly elected Syria to the powerful U.N. body for a two-year term on the first ballot. It received 160 'yes' votes from 177 nations. Syria was the unanimous choice of Arab and Asian nations for the Asian seat on the Council being vacated by Bangladesh. — AP

Europe rallies behind U.S.

By Vaiju Naravane

PARIS, OCT. 8. Most European leaders were quick to make televised statements of support following the launch of the U.S. attacks against the Taliban. The U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, had taken care to speak to them on the telephone prior to the attacks.

Expressing French solidarity with the American position, the President, Mr. Jacques Chirac, said in a short televised address that the U.S. had "made renewed demands for French military participation." These, he said would be met. The Bush administration had asked Mr. Chirac to send a senior French adviser to Washington for discreet and concrete consultation just prior to the strikes. Washington has been careful to keep France, considered by many to be the most reluctant of the Western European, allies fully in the loop.

Mr. Chirac said an aircraft carrier was already on its way and that France would give other military support as and when it was required. The Defence Minister, Mr. Alain Richard, today revealed that special French commando units were already operating within Afghanistan, cooperating and acting together with similar British and American forces. France has deployed 1500 men in Egypt and the Red Sea. The kind of support Paris is giving includes motorised infantry, commandos, frigates and other ships. The French foreign legion based in Djibuti could be called in.

Mr. Richard said in an interview: "We have discussed the division of tasks with our allies, the Americans. The U.S. knows that we can swing into action with dozens of planes or ships and thousands of men to take part in operations against terrorist targets on Afghan territory. It's a matter of days."

Though France houses the largest north African Muslim population of any European nation (4 million or 7.8 per cent of the population), there were no reports of violence from Arab dominated suburbs near the usual hotspots of Paris, Marseilles or Lyon. The daily *Liberation* today published a report saying that French Muslims were by and large in support of the attacks and did not feel affinity towards radical Islam. However, "vigilante" the French high alert, anti-terrorist action continues, with thousands of

policemen patrolling the streets and deployed in the vulnerable underground railway network.

In Italy, Mr. Silvio Berlusconi, resolutely pro-U.S. conservative Prime Minister said: "Italy is beside the United States and with all those who are fighting terrorism." Italy has been placed under high alert after U.S. intelligence services warned that it could be the next target for terrorist attacks.

"Let us not forget that the Vatican, the seat of the Roman Catholic religion is located in Rome. If this is seen as a war between the Christian and Muslim civilisations by misguided terrorists who listened to Osama bin Laden's rhetoric yesterday, we could see bloody attacks taking place here. The authorities are afraid that Rome's ancient monuments like the Colosseum, its many churches and museums could become the target of attack," said journalist Giovanni Porta.

The presence in Rome of the former ruler of Afghanistan, Mr. Zahir Shah, is a distinct source for Italian authorities. The former monarch has lived here for the past 28 years, ever since his ouster from power in 1973 in a coup. Maurizio Calvi, Director of the Centre for Research on Terrorism said: "The diplomatic activity around the former King, his continued presence in Rome and the fact that he has reached an agreement with the Northern Alliance to form what could be described as a government in exile could be dangerous."

But there were several anti-war protests in Italy, especially outside the U.S. embassy and the buildings of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

The European Union issued a statement of solidarity saying "The Afghan people deserve a government which is truly representative." The Prime Minister, Mr. Guy Verhofstadt, said: "The E.U., on the basis of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1368 considers this riposte to be legitimate."

The E.U.'s commissioner for foreign policy, Mr. Xavier Solana of Spain, said the E.U.'s support for the strikes was "unambiguous". The Taliban, he said, was facing the consequences of their actions.

In Spain, the Prime Minister, Mr. Jose Maria Aznar, was vociferous in his support of U.S. action, describing it as "an act of legitimate self-defence."

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2001

DO NOT ESCALATE THE 'SMART' WAR

THE MILITARY OFFENSIVE that the United States and Britain have launched against Afghanistan is presumably the first overt aspect of a smart war against the terrorists with a global reach and also their hosts. For the larger international community, a sensible course at this early stage of this conflict in Afghanistan is to impress upon the American-British coalition and its military allies in the wings to recognise and avert the geopolitical risks as also the human costs of a wider conflagration. This will be a difficult but humane choice. And, if the U.S.-U.K. brain-trust is indeed capable of sustaining its own agenda of a smart war, it should take the initiative to scale down the losses of human lives and of civilian assets to truly negligible proportions. The latest war against the devilish Taliban regime in Afghanistan and Osama bin Laden, the suspected don of international terrorism, had become inevitable in the context of a chain reaction of events involving them and the U.S. since September 11. After a band of barbaric conspirators struck horrendously against some high profile targets in the U.S. on that day, taking a heavy human and material toll, Washington began sensitising the international community to a discourse about an entirely new kind of war against terrorism. It has been said that the promised battle against the terrorist-fugitives and their patrons will be fought on several different fronts. The array of means outlined is impressive — patient diplomacy and the intelligence war of secrecy, besides a new practice of forays across the cyberspace to squeeze the finances of the terror-mongers and, if necessary, open military conflicts with them.

However, as the U.S. and the U.K. started pounding targets in Afghanistan on Sunday night, the stark horrors of a prospective war triggered some equally predictable international concerns about the likely humanitarian fallout. The Anglo-American attacks have already entailed the use of the utmost state-of-the-art

cruise missiles and a range of stealth bombers for aerial sorties to deliver "smart" but ferocious weapons. Arguably, these devices will help target Osama's terrorist camps as also the military machinery of the Taliban with a high degree of unprecedented precision that might curtail or rule out civilian casualties in significant numbers. Yet, the first waves of the Anglo-American military intrusions across the sky over Afghanistan have already forced its hapless inhabitants out of their miserable homes. So, the global community cannot simply ignore the conspicuous signs of a humanitarian catastrophe. A fresh exodus of Afghan refugees, perhaps numbering over a million, may have already been caused by the terrifying impact or images of the American-British military might.

Among the states that have variously facilitated the latest war on some suspected sources of terrorism, whatever be the different political compulsions of these countries, Pakistan may be the first to feel the shockwaves of a new humanitarian crisis. Already hosting countless refugees of the past conflicts in Afghanistan, Pakistan is obviously wary of a new influx into its territory. On a different plane, the U.S. also seems aware of the bad name that a humanitarian disaster could bring to the global anti-terror 'campaign' itself. The U.S. is, therefore, air-dropping food and medical supplies over Afghanistan in a follow-up effort to ease the aftershocks of the aerial and missile raids over the Taliban-Osama positions. Yet, with Osama and the Taliban leaders said to have survived the initial blitzkrieg by the U.S. and the U.K., the battle for the hearts of the traumatised Afghan people is becoming equally complicated. While the politics of a possible post-Taliban dispensation cannot be the prime concern of the Afghan people at this particular moment, the international community must brace itself for the humanitarian tragedy in Afghanistan and act quickly.

US talks tough with UN on strike

WS (N) 9/10
DESIKAN THIRUNARAYANAPURAM
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 8 -
The USA today informed the United Nations that it reserves its right to attack any nation that it believes is supporting terrorism even as American forces continued to pound Afghanistan for the second successive day today.

US Administration officials said 31 targets in Kabul and Kandahar were hit on the first day of attacks yesterday. The \$1-million Tomahawk and other cruise missiles fired from ships and submarines in the Indian Ocean and B-2 Stealth, B-52 and other bombers carried out strikes on airports and command-and-communication centres.

Some ground troop concentrations were also targeted, the defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, said. The US defence forces made "some progress" in destroying the Taliban's air defences, he said.

Washington plans to continue the current campaign for a week or so. By then it hopes to destroy all or most of Afghanistan's air defences and command centres.

The US would return with a second phase of the attacks to hit and destroy what's left of what it terms is the Taliban's "terrorist network". In a parallel development, Washington is also aiding the Northern Alliance fighting Taliban.

US authorities conceded there has been "collateral damage", referring to some civilians who had been hit, but denied any knowledge of specific numbers. The Taliban ambassador to Pakistan, Mr Zaeef, said 20 people including women, children and the aged were killed.

The USA formally notified the UN that it is defending its national security under the UN Charter and that the war could go beyond Afghanistan.

THE STATESMAN

9 OCT 2001

U.S., Britain attack Afghanistan

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 7. The United States and Britain have launched major military strikes against "carefully selected" targets in Afghanistan.

From the Treaty Room in the White House, the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush said, "These carefully-targeted actions are designed to disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations and to attack the military capability of the Taliban regime".

The U.S. and Britain are hitting targets in Kabul, Kandahar and Jalalabad. The second wave of attacks against Kandahar has been heavier and more severe, it is said. The compound of Mullah Omar, leader of the Taliban, has been targeted.

At the Pentagon, the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, argued that the strikes were to complement the economic, humanitarian and diplomatic activity already put in place in the current campaign against terrorism.

One of the objectives was to raise the cost of doing business with terrorists, Mr. Rumsfeld said. The strikes are intended to create the proper conditions for a sustained campaign in the anti-terrorism front, he said.

The Pentagon said that a combination of land and sea-based aircraft have been used; as also surface ships and submarines. The first hits on Afghanistan saw at least 15 land-based aircraft and 25 sea-based jets taking part. A total of 50 Tomahawk Cruise missiles have been unleashed, it has been officially said. Mr. Rumsfeld said that there is no indication of any U.S. aircraft lost or damaged.

In Northern Afghanistan too there have been strikes with the



The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, addressing the nation from the White House. — AP (Text of address on Page 13)

targets being in Tahar, Kanduz and Mazar-e-Sharief. If the Taliban is dealt a major blow in these areas, it will be a shot in the arm for the Northern Alliance which stands to gain a lot of territory, analysts said.

In announcing that countries such as Canada, France, Australia and Germany have pledged cooperation as the operations unfold, Mr. Bush said that the Taliban "will pay a price".

Mr. Bush called the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, this morning to inform him of the start of operations. The U.S. President also called the four Congressional leaders in the Senate and the House of Representatives notifying them ahead of the strikes.

The first of the strikes came after the White House once again rejected negotiations with the Taliban on the detention and trial of

Osama bin Laden on the presentation of "evidence". The White House on Sunday morning repeated what the U.S. President has been saying all along, including that Osama must be given up and the terrorist camps shut down.

The U.S. President also stressed that the "oppressed people of Afghanistan will know the generosity of America and our allies".

Military strategists are saying the initial strikes against specific targets are intended to soften the area as food and medicine drops are being scheduled. The Pentagon said that air drops will be taking place all over Afghanistan, especially in the non-Taliban areas.

The first of the attacks came by way of Cruise missiles from ships and submarines, followed by attacks by F-16s and other jets off

the carriers and forward bases of the U.S. It is believed that the heavy set B-52s capable of launching Cruise missiles and smart munitions have also been used.

The strikes are expected to continue and gather intensity as the hours go by. Apart from the B-52s, the B-1 and the Stealth aircraft, the B-2 are also seeing action.

The first targets were wide-ranging sites — air defence and command centres, communications systems, electrical grids and any facility that could be used in a hostile fashion by the Taliban. The Pentagon will also go after what is left of the Taliban Air Force, it is said.

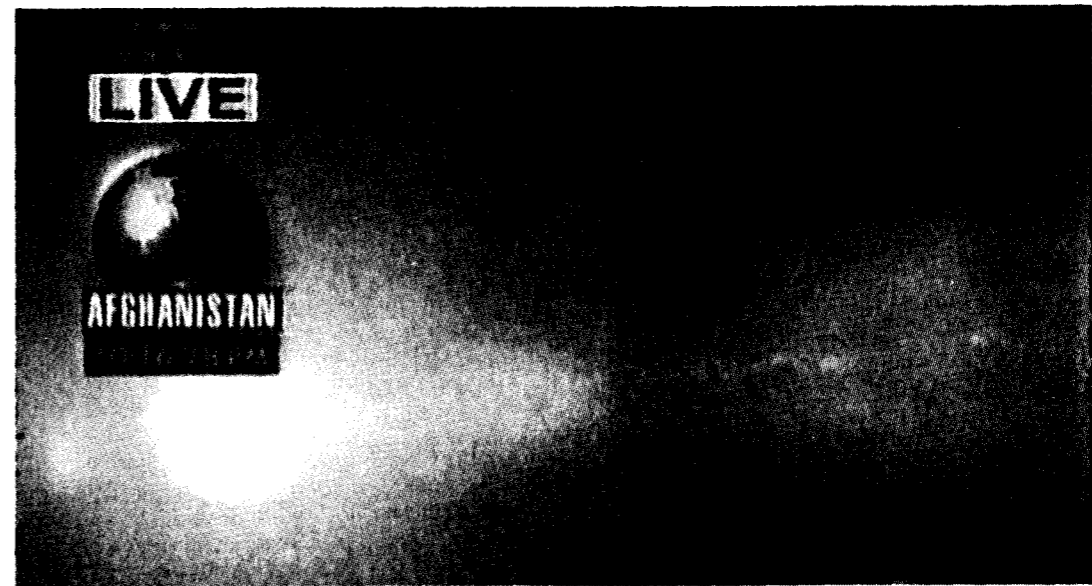
Independently reports are also trickling in of the Northern Alliance starting an offensive of its own against the Taliban. The Northern Alliance has been egged on in recent weeks by the U.S. and information is that the Alliance has been militarily beefed up as well.

There are unconfirmed reports based on wireless intercepts and listening devices that many of the Taliban fighters are disillusioned and are blaming Pakistan for the turn of events. But Taliban commanders are apparently urging them not to break ranks at this time.

"We did not ask for this mission, but we will fulfil it. The name of today's military operation is 'Enduring Freedom'. We defend not only our precious freedoms, but also the freedom of people everywhere to live and raise their children free from fear," Mr. Bush argued.

Five blasts in Kabul

AP, AFP report: In Kabul, the first explosions could be heard about 8:57 p.m. local time (16.27 GMT), when it



This television image shows explosions in Kabul on Sunday. Thunderous explosions and the rattle of anti-aircraft fire were heard in the Afghan capital. — AP

was dark. Five large explosions shook the city, followed by the sounds of anti-aircraft fire.

A Taliban official in Kabul contacted by telephone from Pakistan said: "We are under attack. They bombed in the south of Kabul. Our guns are firing." The official, who gave his name only as Mudir, gave no further details.

In London Prime Minister Tony Blair said that British missile-firing submarines were taking part in the operations. He said the submarines had joined in a U.S.-led attack on Taliban military facilities and forces in Afghanistan at the request of Washington. He said British warplanes would join the attack in the next few days.

Mr. Bush had warned the Taliban on Saturday that "time is running out" for them to hand over Osama and top leaders of his Al-Qaeda terrorist network. The White House also rejected a last-ditch offer by the Taliban on Sunday to put Osama on trial in Afghanistan.

Mr. Bush also contacted his French counterpart, Mr. Jacques Chirac, today to tell him the U.S. was about to launch attacks on Afghanistan, Mr. Chirac's spokeswoman, Ms. Catherine Colonna, said. He had called Mr. Chirac to tell him of the impending attacks, Ms. Colonna said. On Friday night, the French President held a special meeting with the Prime Minister, Mr. Lionel Jospin, the Defence Minister, Mr. Alain Richard, and the Foreign Affairs Minister, Mr. Hubert Vedrine, the spokeswoman added.

President Bush also referred to India's expressed concern relating to attacks on Indians, especially Sikhs. Mr. Vajpayee was assured that steps had been taken to clear misunderstandings that followed the killing of one Sikh petrol pump owner in the U.S.

Meetings had been organised with Sikh representatives and efforts made to ensure that innocent people were not attacked. The Sikhs in the U.S. were reported to be satisfied with the steps taken.

Apparently, some Americans mistook Sikhs to be Arabs or even followers of Osama bin Laden because of the turbans they wear. Propaganda on television and through other means has corrected this.

Taliban to take on U.S.

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, OCT. 7. Representatives of the Taliban embassy here and other consulate offices in Pakistan, tonight confirmed the strikes by the U.S. and its allies, but appeared to be determined to take on the super power. "It is jihad", an unidentified representative in the Islamabad embassy of the Taliban remarked.

It is believed that American and British planes flew sorties over the cities of Kabul and Kandahar targeting the military and administrative headquarters of the Taliban. The first blitzkrieg lasted just a few minutes. There was no indication as to how successful the sorties were and if there were any civilian casualties.

Reports said that in Kabul power was shut off as the U.S. and the U.K. launched their strikes, and restored after the raids ended.

The CNN reported explosions

in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar, where the headquarters of the ruling Taliban militia is located. The Taliban leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar lives there.

The Associated Press in a report said that the targets of U.S. attacks could include the southwestern part of Kabul, which includes the Darulaman Palace, an ancient royal residence, and the Balahisar Fort, an old Moghul-style installation.

A curfew was in effect in the city, making it impossible to independently determine further details.

There was no immediate reaction from the Pakistan Government to the developments. The Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, is scheduled to hold a news conference early tomorrow morning and is expected to defend the decision of the U.S. and its allies.

A terrorist act: Taliban

ISLAMABAD, OCT. 7. Afghanistan's Taliban militia today condemned the U.S.-led attacks against Afghanistan as a "terrorist act" and said it would not deliver the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, to the U.S., the Afghan Islamic Press reported.

"The U.S. attack is a terrorist act," the AIP quoted the Taliban ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Abdul Salam Zaef, as saying. "We cannot hand over Osama to the U.S.," he said.

Osama and the Taliban leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar, survived the U.S. and British attacks on Sunday, the Taliban ambassador to Pakistan said in Islamabad. — AP, AFP

Bush speaks to PM, promises ban on JeM

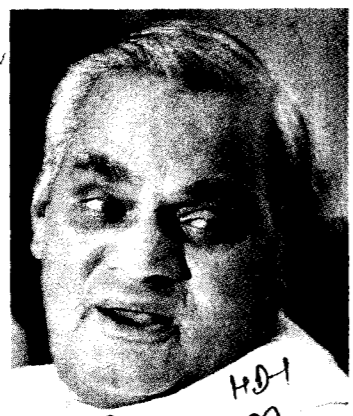
By Neena Vyas

NEW DELHI, OCT. 7. Four hours before the American strikes against Afghanistan began, President George W. Bush of the U.S. spoke to Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, to inform him that military operations were imminent.

Speaking to him over telephone for about 10 minutes at 5.30 p.m., President Bush told Mr. Vajpayee that the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, would be visiting India in the early part of the third week of October, possibly around October 15.

Mr. Vajpayee is understood to have welcomed the proposed visit.

Apparently, a categorical assurance was given by President Bush that "very shortly" the Jaish-e-



Mohammed, the terrorist organisation behind the recent attack on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, would be put on the U.S. list of

terrorist organisations. Officials at the Prime Minister's Office also confirmed that Mr. Bush unequivocally condemned terrorist strikes all over the world, wherever they occur, including Jammu and Kashmir.

The Indian Government here had not cared to hide the fact that it was peeved by the manner in which the so-called global coalition against terrorism had virtually ignored the harsh reality that Pakistan was a major sponsor of terrorism and hardly qualified to join the battle against it. The assurances given by Mr. Bush today are expected to go some way towards relieving the palpable tension in the Government here relating to the way the entire matter relating to global terrorism was going.

Al-Qaida target No. 1, but Washington silent on Jaish Terror blacklist spares Lashkar

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, Oct. 6. — The United States has redesignated 26 extremist groups, including Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaida and the LTTE, as "foreign terrorist organisations", but ignored India's demands to blacklist the Pakistan-backed terrorist groups active in Jammu and Kashmir such as the Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and the Jaish-e-Mohammed.

The state department spokesman, Mr Richard Boucher, said here yesterday that Washington would consider later this year if the Jaish, orchestrators of the recent car bomb blast at the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in Srinagar, should be formally designated a terrorist group. The "foreign terrorist organisations" stipulated in the biennial list — published in the Federal Register — are subject to strict financial and visa restrictions.

Mr Boucher, however, added the Jaish is listed among extremist organisations in the state department's annual report on global terrorism though it has not not been formally designated a terrorist group. India had in recent weeks renewed its demands for the USA to include the LeT and the JeM in its list of foreign terrorist organisations. The only



THEY WANT TO GIVE OSAMA A HAND: Supporters of Jamiat Ulema Islam shout anti-USA slogans in Peshawar on Saturday. More than 5000 people took part in the demonstration. — AP/PTI

Pakistan-based group on the list is the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen.

"As we embark on a long struggle against terrorism, I hope this list will draw the attention of governments across the world ...," the US Secretary of State, Mr Colin Powell, said in a statement yesterday. Foreign governments should help Washington

isolate these groups, choke off their sources of funding and stop them from crossing borders, Mr Powell added. This year's list was not dictated by the Black Tuesday attacks, state department officials said.

Besides the al-Qaida the list also includes six groups believed to have links to bin Laden, Mr Boucher said.

These are the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Gama'a al-Islamiyya of Egypt, Algeria's Armed Islamic Group, the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen based in Pakistan and the Abu Sayyaf group in The Philippines. Also included is an array of other groups such as the Hamas and the Hizbollah which are involved

with the conflict in West Asia.

Three other organisations, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, the Real IRA and the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (known by its Spanish initials AUC) were designated terrorist groups in the last two years and therefore did not have to be certified as such in the latest list.

Mr Powell singled out not only the al-Qaida but also the Hamas, the Palestine Islamic Jihad, the LTTE, Colombia's FARC and the Basque separatists of Spain as having carried out what he called murderous attacks on innocent people in the last two years. Others, such as the Palestinian group Abu Nidal, the Aum Shinrikyo cult in Japan and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (initialled PKK in Turkish) had been less active over the last two years but had still continued to plan and prepare for possible attacks, he added.

But none of them has ever carried out an attack on the scale of the Black Tuesday assaults. A month-old report prepared by the terrorism expert, Mr Kenneth Katzman gave a chilling picture of the al-Qaeda's potential reach. It said bin Laden's followers were believed to be operating in 34 countries and estimated the size of his force at 3,000 full-time operatives.

UK hopes tax havens will join terror money purge

REUTERS

LONDON, Oct. 6. — Britain's finance minister Mr Gordon Brown said today he hoped offshore finance centres would join the campaign to stop money reaching terrorist organisations following the September 11 attacks on the USA.

Speaking ahead of a meeting of finance ministers of the Group of Seven (G7) industrialised countries this weekend in Washington, Mr Brown said measures to stop money laundering would be on the agenda.

"The discussion at the G7 is about how we can agree to a plan of action and

Blair & Bush: A walk in lockstep

MARTIN FLETCHER AND RICHARD CLEROUX
THE TIMES, LONDON

WASHINGTON/OTTAWA, Oct. 6. — Some years ago the British foreign office banned the use of the hackneyed and precious term "special relationship" to describe the Anglo-American bond, but today it has rarely been more apposite.

Mr Tony Blair and Mr George W Bush are walking in lockstep, talking several times a week and enjoying a relationship that is being compared on this side of the Atlantic to that between Baroness Margaret Thatcher and Mr Ronald Reagan or Winston Churchill and Franklin D Roosevelt.

Not since Baroness Thatche

r's heydays has a British Prime Minister enjoyed such warm and extensive coverage in the US media. Mr Blair had become "America's chief foreign ambassador to members of the emerging coalition against Osama bin Laden", yesterday's *Wall Street Journal* said. He is "America's closest ally", said *The New York Times*. He is enjoying "his finest hour", said *USA Today*.

When Mr Bush addressed Congress on 20 September, the Prime Minister was given the seat of honour next to Mrs Laura Bush, two standing ovations, and a ringing declaration from the President that America had "no truer friend than Great Britain".

Appreciation of Britain's sup

port in America's hour of crisis extends far beyond Washington. In casual encounters ordinary Americans are making a point of telling British visitors how much their nation's backing means to them.

Sir Christopher Meyer, the British ambassador, said his staff had been "overwhelmed with expressions of gratitude, solidarity and thanks".

Mr Blair has offered moral, military and political support, but his usefulness to Mr Bush does not stop there.

On Thursday he presented to the British parliament - and the world - the most detailed evidence yet of Bin Laden's responsibility for the 11 September attacks.

Officials in Washington were

UK TROOPS IN OMAN FOR TRAINING

MUSCAT, Oct. 6. — Omani and British officials today tried to dampen rising expectations that thousands of British troops conducting war games in Oman may join any strike over Afghanistan over the attacks on the USA.

Speculation over Oman's role in the US hunt for Osama gained momentum after US defence secretary Mr Donald Rumsfeld visited the strategically located Gulf Arab state on Thursday. "It is misleading the world to think that Oman may be used as a launch pad for the attack," an official at Oman's defence ministry said. "We have made it clear that the exercises have only one object and that is to train our troops. But the media has chosen to get carried away."

— Reuters

adamant that he did this of his own volition, but it was clearly very helpful to the US administration. The officials said his presentation was "closely coordinated" with the American, included US Intelligence material, and was cleared in advance by the CIA.

"Everybody on this side of the Atlantic who needed to see it saw it," one official said.

While the USA must graciously accept the reality that it cannot carry on as the world's sole superpower forever, India can help it to expand its foreign policy

AMERICA AND THE WORLD

W3 (W) 578 7/10

By JK DUTT

A DISPASSIONATE and objective analysis of the reasons for the devastating terrorist strike on the USA shows that in all probability, this strike epitomised crossing the Rubicon of a supercharged tinder box's explosive contents nurtured and inflamed by resultants from America's foreign policy, especially that linked to West Asia. Out of all the thorny issues that plague this region of the world, none is more rankling than the Palestine-Israel conflict. There persists a nagging feeling that Israel has become overly brazen in its activities as it is cock-sure of America's backing in whatever it does or does not do.

Even when Israel oversteps laid down norms, America's censure amounts to just a mild rebuke which Tel Aviv never takes seriously. Another unedifying American foreign policy gambit in vogue is its gauntlet throwing in international relations, witness its national missile defence controversy, its espionage flights over the South China Sea, its indignation at the European Union's emergence as a global power centre, and so on. It is desirable that the USA incorporates some radical changes in its foreign policy.

Bill Clinton did try to assuage Palestine-Israel feelings during his tenure by tactfully pressurising Israel, on the one hand, to vacate southern Lebanon which was indeed an unthinkable criterion, and Palestine on the other to start thinking on the lines of accepting joint ownership of Jerusalem as well as the holy shrine that this city contains. The then Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, and Palestine's chairman Yasser Arafat almost came to signing a declaration at Sharm el Shaikh. Alas, Clinton went and so did Ba-

rak before this could materialise. As if on cue, Palestine-Israel relations not only became tenuous but broke out into Intifada embattling the new Israeli PM Ariel Sharon's Sabras, a battle which ostensibly erupted when both disputed the rights over the Noble Sanctuary al Sharaf shrine in Jerusalem. There has been no let-up since this violence

that would be forthcoming from Tel Aviv as also from the influential Jewish domestic lobby in the USA. While there is no gainsaying that the USA has always desired a "friend in need" in West Asia, Washington blindly focussed all its attention on Israel to the exclusion of all

It would be prudent for Bush to remove all American army and air force troops from West Asian countries where they presently camp



began a year ago which also could be a contributory factor to the 11 September outrage.

President George W Bush has to apply saner ideas in West Asia if suspicion and distrust are to be checkmated in one of the world's most volatile crucibles. Several steps are recommended. First, he needs to unequivocally tell Israel that Jewish settlements on the West Bank of the River Jordan must be demolished and no further building must be allowed. Simultaneously, he needs to deploy a strong UN force in this area for monitoring both the adversaries, preferably under the glare of the media. He must also put a stop to his country's arms merchants doing business with Israel — the F16s being used by the Israeli Air Force are a giveaway of this unwholesome racket. He should then earnestly reactivate the Sharm el Shaikh platform from where it was left off and doggedly see the earlier declaration through in word and deed.

Second, he has to evolve a whole new political strategy to counter the displeasures

others. Five decades after the Balfour "misappropriation", this blind attention has only gained America a host of enemies in the predominantly Islamic West Asian conclave. Hence under the prevailing circumstances, it would be far more pragmatic as well as profitable for the USA to close ranks with a few regional Islamic nations that count. Such a move will convey to Tel Aviv that Washington's horizon has widened for pursuing national interests at home and abroad and these interests are not necessarily linked to a blinkered attitude towards Israel.

Iran is the first nation on the cards. President Mohammad Khatami's re-election is a beacon in this direction which has now been further bolstered by the recent path-breaking formal visit of the British foreign secretary, Jack Straw. Washington should shed its inhibitions, sparing no effort to solidify its relations with Tehran. Similar interaction is necessary with Saudi Arabia. Washington already main-

tains good working relations with Riyadh but these have to be broadened and strengthened. Saudi Arabia exercises considerable clout over the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Organisation of Islamic Conference, two Islamic caucuses that can be an immense asset to the USA. It would also be prudent for

sain, and initiate a Calvinistic chapter in American-Iraqi bilateral bonding.

India can be of great help to the USA in the latter's quest for forging and expanding its foreign policy. Our relations with all West Asian countries have been very cordial and well sustained. We can easily adopt the role of a facilitator for President Bush in enhancing America's newly derived foreign policy. In fact, we can be an effective two-way conduit for Washington, Tehran, Riyadh and Bagdad. Championing peaceful coexistence can be our operative doctrine.

Finally, the USA has to graciously accept the reality that it cannot carry on as the world's sole superpower for ever. There are three others raring to go and each one has justifiable aspirations. The European Union heads the list and its last meeting at Nice was indicative enough as to what the EU's long-term objective would be. Russia too might decide to join the EU in this venture in which event, this conglomerated super power will certainly exceed the status of the USA. China is the next and does not require any elaboration — its growth rate says it all. Africa is the third candidate albeit, time frame wise, a century later, provided it can acquire the right kind of leadership.

The USA must look at this unfolding scenario in a mature fashion. The subject of security apart, world trading systems have to be made much more malleable and ingrained with a level playing field; the onus lies with the USA to get this rendered. George W Bush has unquestionably demonstrated his credentials as a discerning political leader. He now has to establish his sagacity as an equally discerning human being, one who is conducive to empathy, in the days ahead. The world looks at him with hope.

The author is Lt. Col. (retd.), Indian Army.

THE STATESMAN

7 OCT 2002

WEST ASIA / 'ISRAEL P.M.'S COMMENTS UNACCEPTABLE'

U.S. rebukes Sharon for remarks

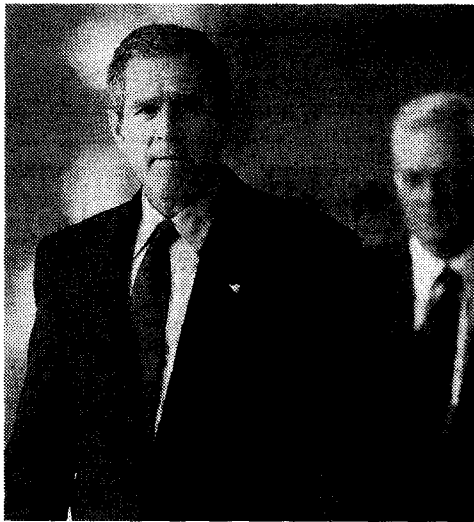
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WASHINGTON, OCT. 6. In a rare public disagreement between two strong allies, the White House has rebuked the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Ariel Sharon for saying the United States risked appeasing Arab nations at Israel's expense like Hitler was appeased on the eve of World War II.

"The Prime Minister's comments are unacceptable," said the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush's spokesman, Mr. Ari Fleischer. "Israel has no stronger friend and ally in the world than the United States, and President Bush is especially a close friend of Israel," he told reporters. He said the U.S. view had been communicated to Mr. Sharon through the U.S. Embassy in Israel and the National Security Council.

Mr. Sharon yesterday called on the U.S. and the West not to seek Arab support for a war against global terrorism at Israel's expense, citing the "dreadful mistake of 1938" when Europe "decided to sacrifice Czechoslovakia" to the Nazis. Israel, he said, "will not be Czechoslovakia." "The United States is not doing anything that would appease the Arabs at Israel's expense," Mr. Fleischer said.

Mr. Sharon's blast came after Mr. Bush said on Tuesday that part of his long-term vision for peace in West Asia was a Palestinian State. Mr. Bush said this had "always" been his pol-



The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, walks out of the Oval Office before delivering a statement in the Rose Garden at the White House in Washington on Friday. — AP

icy. *The New York Times* had reported that the Bush administration had planned a West Asia policy initiative, including endorsement of a

Palestinian statement, that was derailed by the September 11 attacks.

Mr. Fleischer said the U.S. had been working for months to press the parties to end the violence and return to a political dialogue and "the United States will continue to press both Israel and the Palestinians to move forward." The dispute marked a rare public disagreement between the two allies since the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington. Israel is the largest recipient of U.S. assistance, estimated at \$3 billion a year.

In response to Mr. Fleischer's comments, a Sharon aide, Mr. Zalman Shoval, said Mr. Sharon did not mean to imply the U.S. had acted dishonorably. "Prime Minister Sharon, of course, did not imply in any way that America and its leaders were dealing in a dishonourable way in the present situation as far as it pertains to Israel," he said.

"What the Prime Minister intended was to make a warning to everyone, including ourselves, but especially to the leaders of the free world, that appeasement never works," Mr. Shoval said. Mr. Bush has been seeking support from Arab and Islamic nations for a coalition for his mission to bring Saudi-born militant Osama Bin Laden to justice. Bin Laden, the prime suspect in the attacks, is believed to be hiding in Afghanistan. — Reuters

THE HINDU

- 7 OCT 2002

Blair to India: Let's tackle Osama, Taliban first

Vajpayee sticks to his guns on fighting terrorism

Times News Network
NEW DELHI: If India had expected a clear-cut public endorsement of its stand against the cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan, it was certainly not forthcoming in as many words. It does seem like both the U.S. and Britain do not want to say anything that may put Pakistan's Gen Pervez Musharraf in any sort of difficulty.

British premier Tony Blair, here on a brief "working visit", made it clear on Saturday that although his country agreed with India that terrorism should be fought in all its forms by the emerging international coalition, the current targets were Osama bin Laden, his terrorist network and camps and the Taliban.

As for Kashmir, Mr Blair extended his "deepest sympathies" for the victims of the recent attack on the Srinagar legislative assembly, saying, "Such outrages have no place in any civilised society and those who perpetrate them should be brought to justice." But that was all. The rest of his brief appearance before

mediapersons on Saturday morning was devoted to Afghanistan. Earlier in the day, Mr Blair met Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee for a 35-minute discussion.

Asked about the inherent con-

Mr Vajpayee, who addressed the media along with the British premier, made India's position clear, saying terrorism could not be tackled selectively. "We are fighting a global war against terrorism and

there has to be a global solution to it," he said. In an obvious reference to Pakistan, Mr Vajpayee said countries "should not be allowed to pursue their own terrorist agendas under the cover of this action" against terrorism. "Condoning a militant act in one place may lay the foundation for a more virulent attack elsewhere. The attack on Srinagar hit at the symbol of the state's democratic polity," he remarked, stating that he and Mr Blair had also discussed "the sinister agenda behind the Srinagar blast".

Both India and Britain agreed that Afghanistan needed a broadbased government, one that represented all ethnic groups and did not export extremism or terrorism. Lauding India's strong stand, Mr Blair said the Indian govt. had made clear what help it could offer in the planned war against extremist activities.



British Prime Minister Tony Blair addresses the media as Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and defence minister Jaswant Singh look on in New Delhi on Saturday

tradition in seeking Pakistan's help in the war against terrorism, Mr Blair said it was important to realise that the focus was on dealing with the situation in Afghanistan and closing down Bin Laden's network and camps.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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OCT 2002

U.S. troops on way to Uzbekistan

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, OCT. 5. Uzbekistan has given the green light to massive U.S. military presence on its territory, with elite American troops already on the way to the Central Asian republic.

Itar-Tass quoted a U.S. government official as saying that 1,000 U.S. troops from the 10th Mountain Division were "in the air" en route to Uzbekistan. The disclosure was made after the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, completed talks with the Uzbek President, Mr. Islam Karimov, in Tashkent on Friday.

Diplomatic sources said the two leaders discussed U.S. payment for using Uzbekistan's facilities and security guarantees for the country in case of a backlash from the Taliban. The Uzbek President also sought American help in forcing Tajikistan, which has tense relations with Uzbekistan, to close down the military camps of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) on its territory. The Taliban-backed IMU is committed to overthrowing the secular regime in Uzbekistan and replacing it with a fundamentalist caliphate.

A Russian daily today quoted an Uzbek official as saying that 200 U.S. troops were already in Uzbekistan setting up reconnaissance, communication and logistic facilities at the military bases in Khanabad and Termez for the impending anti-terrorist operation in Afghanistan.

AP reports from Tashkent:

The U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Rumsfeld, visiting West Asia and Central Asia to build support for the international battle against terrorism, said on Thursday the battle may involve less use of military force than was commonly assumed. He offered the strongest suggestion yet that while the U.S. military would play a role, its contribution may be relatively small. Some also believe military action may not come soon. The French



This television image released by Qatar's Al-Jazeera television company on Friday shows the most recent visual of the Saudi fugitive, Osama bin Laden, at an undisclosed location, with his top lieutenant, Ayman al-Zawahri, (left). It is believed to be a recording of the celebration of the union of Osama's Al-Qaeda and Al Zawahri's Egyptian Jihad — AP

Defence Minister said no retaliation was expected for several weeks.

On the other hand, Mr. Rumsfeld did not rule out the possibility of taking military action to ensure that the Taliban's air defence forces do not pose a threat to the delivery of American food aid to parts of Afghanistan. He said U.S. military planes would make airdrops of food, but said details were being worked out.

The U.S. has assembled more than 30,000 troops in the region around Afghanistan, including two aircraft carrier battle groups, a contingent of Marines, hundreds of land-based warplanes and preparations for army special operations soldiers to conduct hit-and-run raids inside Afghanistan.

Mr. Rumsfeld, however,

seemed to indicate that the first purpose of that growing military might is to apply pressure — as the freezing of terrorist groups' money is applying a financial squeeze — rather than to launch a major attack. He stressed that it could take unexpected turns, but would eventually succeed.

Pak. offer to Zahir Shah

An AFP report from Rome said the former Afghan monarch, Mr. Mohammed Zahir Shah, today received the first direct contact from the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, on plans to form a post-Taliban government in the country.

A letter from Gen. Musharraf passed to the ex-king's entourage by the Italian Foreign Ministry requested Mr. Zahir Shah to send an envoy for urgent talks in Islamabad to discuss the political fu-

ture of Afghanistan, the Ministry said. Gen. Musharraf had handed the letter to Italy's Deputy Foreign Minister, Ms. Margherita Boniver, during talks in Islamabad yesterday.

The development came on a day of behind-the-scenes diplomacy in the Italian capital, which has played host to the exiled king since he was removed in a coup in 1973 after ruling the central Asian country for 40 years.

Mr. Zahir Shah and his advisors held talks with the top U.S. diplomat, Mr. Richard Haass, the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush's special envoy to Northern Ireland. His advisors said he was also awaiting an envoy from the Taliban's stronghold of Kandahar as part of the intensifying quest for a post-Taliban administration in his country.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

6 OCT 2002

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2001

OSAMA AND THE DEEDS OF MASS TERROR

A FORCEFUL CASE has been presented by the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, against Osama bin Laden, the suspected evil genius behind the atrocities of mass terror that stunned the world on September 11. The British refrain is that some significantly credible links have been established between Osama bin Laden and those crimes against humanity. Now, the United Kingdom is certainly privy to much of the sensitive intelligence that the United States is said to be mobilising in this connection. The U.K. is a prime ally of the U.S. in its current diplomatic "campaign" against all forms of terrorism with a clear impact on the conscience of the entire global community. Yet, Mr. Blair clarified in the House of Commons on Thursday that the strands of intelligence inputs which he unveiled should not be routinely weighed against the legal touchstone of an "evidentiary" case. The reason is plain enough. As suitably stated by him, delicate is the need to protect the integrity of the ongoing investigative process in the U.S. and Britain as also elsewhere. This singular consideration has prevented him from disclosing "other intelligence" of "an even more direct nature". Washington and London appear to have shared the more valuable information with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which has already identified itself with the security interests of a prime member such as the U.S., and with the British opposition leaders as the case might be. On the whole, therefore, Mr. Blair has outlined a virtual first information report on the worldwide suspicions about Osama bin Laden's hideous role in the mini-holocaust that occurred in America on September 11.

Mr. Blair's latest parliamentary statement on this issue of global concern centres on several important "intelligence" findings. One of the closest lieutenants of Osama bin Laden is said to have "admitted the involvement of (their) Al-Qaeda organisation". At least three of the plane hijackers who carried out the suicidal raids on

September 11 have been "positively identified as (the) known associates" of the suspected mastermind himself. The intelligence sleuths have reportedly traced the criminal trail of a terrorist, who died in the latest suicidal attacks, to the earlier bombings of an American naval vessel, in one instance, and two U.S. embassies in Africa in the other case. Reinforcing the investigative 'lead' of this kind is the circumstantial 'evidence' now unearthed by the American secret services and others, that Osama bin Laden had told his associates prior to September 11 itself that he "had a major operation against America under preparation" and that they should return to their secure bases in the Taliban-controlled Afghanistan before that date. Another major dimension of Mr. Blair's case reveals a symbiotic relationship between the Taliban and Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda.

Objectively, there is ⁴⁹⁻¹⁰ ~~no~~ ⁵⁷ need to discount Mr. Blair's version on the ^{W3} specious ground that the U.S. rather than the U.K., America's closest ally, should have been the first to take the world into confidence in this manner. The truth simply is that the U.K. and many other countries, including India, have lost their citizens in the terrorist carnage that has outraged the civilised world as never before. India, a victim of externally-sponsored terrorism, as also Pakistan are among those being kept informed by the U.S. about the progress of its probe against Al-Qaeda. Given the Taliban's original links with Pakistan in this specific context, it is of utmost investigative salience that Islamabad should have reckoned the evidence adduced by the U.S. as an adequate basis for a possible indictment in a court of law. For the Taliban, a coded diplomatic message from Pakistan cannot be more forthright. With the international community closing in on the Taliban's diplomatic flanks, such as they exist, the regime in Kabul should at least now think of allowing Osama bin Laden to face the due process of law.

THE HINDU

6 OCT 2002

Blair puts Taliban on notice

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, OCT. 5. The British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, who has emerged as the leading campaigner for the United States in its fight against international terrorism, today along with the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, put the Taliban on notice to either hand over the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, or be prepared to face the consequences, which could include the demise of the militia.

Mr. Blair, who flew in here for a four-hour 'working visit' from Moscow, declared in the presence of Gen. Musharraf, after a 90-minute meeting with him at the Aiwan-e-Sadar (Presidential palace), that there was "overwhelming and compelling" evidence of Osama's direct involvement in the September 11 attacks on the U.S.

In his comments to a select group of correspondents, Mr. Blair said "the Taliban has a choice. Either it yields on the demand of Osama or becomes part of the people shielding Osama. In such a case, the Taliban would be our legitimate enemy."

Gen. Musharraf echoed the sentiments of Mr. Blair on the evidence leading to the involvement of Osama in the September 11 strikes but maintained that Pakistan would not "stand in judgment on the details." In response to a question, he admitted that in the course of their talks, they had discussed the "future of Afghanistan and we did take into account all possibilities."

Mr. Blair emphasised that a response to the September 11 incidents was not aimed against the



The British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, with the Pakistan President, Gen. Musharraf, in Islamabad on Friday. — Reuters

people of Afghanistan. "Let me say still less Islam. Islam is a peaceful religion and a vast majority of Muslims is outraged at the September 11 incidents. It is not a crime against the West but against humanity."

Britain and Pakistan have come together under extraordinary cir-

Blair in Delhi: Page 12

cumstances. Ever since the military coup of October 1999, the United Kingdom has been engaged in a slanging match with the Musharraf regime.

But today, Mr. Blair declared the revival of the U.K.-Pakistan defence cooperation and pledged his full support for debt reduction.

"September 11 has changed the

world. Pakistan has made the right choice. Result would be good for the international community and Pakistan. Let me assure you we will not walk away. Neither would others. Now is the time for us to use our friendship."

Earlier, the Taliban said it was prepared to put Osama on trial in an Afghan court if the U.S. provided solid evidence against him. The Afghan Ambassador to Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, said here "we are prepared to try him if America provides solid evidence of Osama bin Laden's involvement in the attacks in New York and Washington." On whether the Taliban would allow the trial in another country, he said: "We are willing to talk about that, but first we must be given the evidence."

THE HINDU

6 OCT 2002

Sharon lashes out at America

Tel Aviv/Jerusalem, October 5

THE ISRAELI Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, renounced a week-old West Asia ceasefire last night, and accused Washington of sacrificing the Jewish state to win Arab support for a broad war coalition.

"All our efforts to arrive at a ceasefire were defeated at the hand of the Palestinians. Firing didn't stop even for a day," Sharon said. "Therefore the Cabinet directed the security apparatus to bring full security to the citizens of Israel. We can rely on ourselves, and from today onwards we will rely only on ourselves."

The scathing attack on the western diplomatic campaign arrived only hours after a Palestinian gunman dressed in an Israeli paratrooper's uniform rampaged through a bus station in northern Galilee, killing three Israelis and wounding eight others.

US unhappy

THE US on Friday objected to Israel Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's "unacceptable" comments on US West Asia policy.

On Thursday Sharon had said that the US should not "conciliate" with Arabs at Israel's expense. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said Prime Minister Sharon's comments were "unacceptable in the President's opinion".

AFP, Jerusalem

Sharon said: "Don't repeat the terrible mistake of 1938 when the enlightened democracies of Europe decided to sacrifice Czechoslovakia for a convenient temporary solution. Do not try to placate the Arabs at our expense." The statement added: "We will not be able to accept that. Israel will not be Czechoslo-

vakia. Israel will fight terror."

The prime minister's blunt remarks and his resort to a metaphor that is a staple of Israeli right-wing rhetoric — the failed policy of appeasement that allowed Hitler's march across Europe — was aimed at domestic opinion.

On the ground, meanwhile, officials from Mr Arafat's Fatah faction accused Israel of resuming its strategy of assassinations after an activist, Rami Kamel, 21, lost a hand in an explosion in the West Bank city of Bethlehem.

"I hold the Israeli government responsible for this assassination attempt which comes after Israel's inner security cabinet decision to carry out assassinations," said Kamel Hmeid, a Fatah official in Bethlehem.

Yesterday's attack in Galilee produced the first Israeli fatalities inside the Jewish state since the ceasefire.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

6 OCT 2002

US Senate votes to lift sanctions on Pakistan

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON/ISLAMABAD, Oct. 5. — The US Senate has unanimously passed a legislation lifting sanctions imposed on Pakistan after General Pervez Musharraf's coup in 1999, while the UK announced renewal of defence cooperation with Islamabad, suspended since 1998.

The Senate foreign relations committee approved the legislation unanimously on Wednesday.

The legislation would also provide the government flexibility in offering military aid to any country helping the USA in its campaign against terrorism. Senate leaders, however, warned that the lifting of sanctions would be temporary and could be re-imposed in 2004 if Pakistan backtracked on its cooperation with USA and failed to move towards democracy.

The British Prime Minister, who had an hour-long meeting with Gen Pervez Musharraf here today, promised a fresh package of help to Pakistan, including IMF aid.

Britain will support steps in the European Union for trade and economic cooperation with Pakistan. An agreement on the issue is likely on Monday, Mr Tony Blair told journalists.

He said Pakistan would agree to a broad-based government in Afghanistan if the Taliban regime fell.

"We've agreed that if the current Taliban regime fails to yield up Bin Laden and it falls, its successor must be broad-based with every key ethnic groups being represented, including the Pashtuns..."

About the 11 September attacks, he said: "This was not a crime against the West. It was a crime against humanity." Gen. Musharraf echoed, saying he had personally condemned "this human tragedy" and agreed that there was evidence that Osama was behind it.

He expressed gratitude to Mr Blair "for his understanding of the problems being confronted by Pakistan."

THE STATESMAN

6 OCT 2002

Pakistan looks at future without Taliban

FROM IDREES BAKHTIAR IN ISLAMABAD AND PRANAY SHARMA IN DELHI

Oct. 5: On a day the US put the final touches to a response to the September strikes, Britain and Pakistan sounded a death knell for Afghanistan's Taliban, discussing a future for the country that appeared to exclude the hardline Islamic leadership.

"We have agreed that if the current Taliban regime fails to yield up bin Laden and it falls, then its successor must be broad-based with every key ethnic group being represented, including the Pashtuns..." Tony Blair, on a global dash to shore up support for the terror war, said in Islamabad after talks with Pervez Musharraf.

Across the border, Delhi, too, aimed to sound out London on the post-Taliban scenario as it readied for the last leg of the British Prime Minister's whistle-stop tour. Blair touched down in Delhi late tonight for a breakfast meeting with Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee tomorrow.

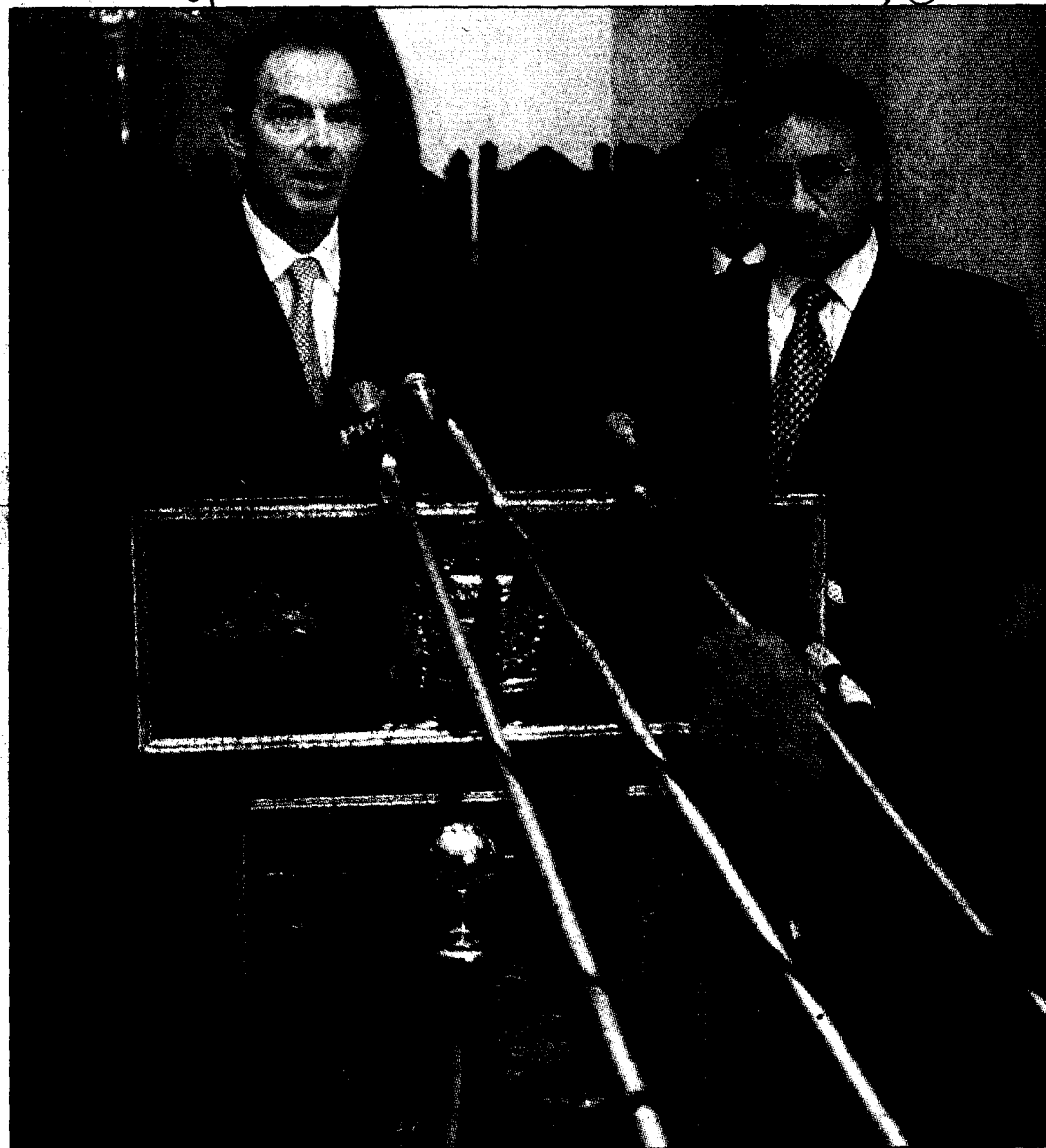
During his afternoon talks in Islamabad, Blair reserved a pat for Musharraf, praising his decision to back the US-led campaign against Osama bin Laden and the Taliban. "I believe Pakistan has made the right choice... The result will be a significant and lasting strengthening of the outside world's relations with Pakistan," he said.

Blair's visit is seen not only as a show of support for Pakistan's backing for the US-led terror war and to ensure that position does not waver, but also offers an opportunity to the military government to boost its legitimacy in the eyes of the world.

The British Prime Minister declared that any military action against Afghanistan should be proportionate, targeted and "not directed against the Afghan people, who are not our enemy".

Musharraf said there was evidence that bin Laden was behind it. "I personally... and my government feel that there is evidence leading to an association between this terrorist act and Osama bin Laden," he said at a joint press conference. "However, we are not standing in judgement on the details of this evidence," he added.

The Pakistan President also expressed gratitude to Blair "for



Blair and Musharraf at a press conference in Islamabad. (AFP)

his understanding of the problems being confronted by Pakistan and my government", referring to the opposition to the US campaign by his country's fundamentalist parties.

"Pakistan certainly looks forward to much healthier, much closer, much better relations with the UK in future," he said.

As though in response, Britain announced major concessions for Pakistan, renewing defence cooperation suspended since the nuclear tests. Blair also promised Musharraf IMF aid, apart from \$40 million for Afghan refugees, and said he would support steps in the European Union for trade and economic cooperation.

Amid the words of praise

Blair rained on his Pakistan counterpart, a sceptical Delhi awaited a confirmation from the British Prime Minister of Musharraf's commitment to rooting out terrorism. Shaken by reports of Pakistan's hand in the suicide strike on the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly earlier this week, it intended to find out from Blair how serious Musharraf was.

Delhi has been trying to convince the West, particularly the US, that Pakistan is "part of the problem and not the solution" of global terror. It has hailed Musharraf's decision to join the terror fight but is firm that Islamabad's words must match its actions against terrorists operating from its soil.

List letdown

FROM K. P. NAYAR

Washington, Oct. 5: Belying expectations that more Pakistan-sponsored Kashmiri outfits would be cited by the US state department as terrorist organisations, the Bush administration today released a list of such groups with little change from the one it had issued two years ago.

This year's list primarily focuses on al Qaida, led by Osama bin Laden. It also lists several Palestinian groups, including Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Hezbollah. Harkat-ul Mujahideen continues to remain on the list.

Troops for Central Asia

Islamabad/Washington, Oct. 5 (Reuters): The US sent troops to Uzbekistan, Afghanistan's northern neighbour, today as Washington readied its response to last month's attacks on New York and Washington.

A US defence official said 1,000 troops from the US 10th Mountain Division were on their way to Uzbekistan, closing in on the Taliban.

"The purpose is to ensure that we have a trap set around Afghanistan in which everyone supports the things we need to do," British Prime Minister Tony Blair said in Islamabad, where he is on a whistle-stop visit to shore up support against global terror.

However, Uzbek President Islam Karimov said he was opposed to any military strike against Afghanistan and would not allow US special operations forces to be deployed from his country.

But Karimov said he would allow US forces to use one airfield for humanitarian or search-and-rescue operations.

Asked during a joint news conference with visiting US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld why he would not allow special forces

to work out of his country, Karimov said: "We are not quite ready for this."

But as American and British forces on sea, land and air finalised logistical arrangements in the Gulf, Central Asia and the Indian Ocean, US intelligence of-



Images of Mohammad Atta (left corner) and Abdul Aziz al-Omar in a picture at an ATM a day before the attack. See P 4

ficials, quoted by the *Washington Post*, told members of Congress it was highly probable that militants linked to Osama bin Laden would attempt another major attack on American targets at home or abroad in the near future.

One official, quoted by the *Post*, said there was a "100 per cent chance" of an attack should the US strike at Afghanistan for

refusing to hand over their prime suspect.

Rumsfeld said he had an inkling of bin Laden's whereabouts, but not an exact location.

"The important thing is to see that we put enough pressure on the terrorist and the people who harbour terrorists through a variety of means over a sustained period," Rumsfeld said. Conventional weapons would not be the determining factor in the war on terrorism, he added.

"It undoubtedly will prove to be a lot more like a cold war than a hot war," Rumsfeld told reporters.

But deputy defense secretary Paul Wolfowitz said today there is "broad agreement" among aides to focus first on the Taliban and bin Laden but indicated Iraq could be a future target.

Rumsfeld was busy shoring up support among Arab states. He held talks with Sultan Qaboos of Oman and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak before heading for Uzbekistan.

Nato secretary-general George Robertson also urged more global cooperation to win the "war on terrorism", describing Afghanistan as a "black hole" that has become a safe haven for terrorists.

Vara surprise choice of Conservatives as deputy chairman

Blair comes with Pak under his belt

■ Gets Musharraf to OK Osama evidence, will discuss Kashmir, post-Taliban govt with Vajpayee

SONIA TRIKHA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 5

FIRMING up Islamabad's support in the "war against terrorism" by renewing defence cooperation suspended since the 1998 nuclear tests and announcing generous economic concessions, British Prime Minister Tony Blair is expected in New Delhi late tonight.

In his talks with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, scheduled for tomorrow, the two leaders are expected to discuss the action against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the nature of a post-Taliban government in the country.

Blair will also meet Home Minister L K Advani and External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh. Also on the agenda is the situation in the region, including the recent militant attacks in Jammu and Kashmir. There is concern that the rhetoric—following recent killings in Srinagar—should not escalate tension between India and Pakistan.

As for a post-Taliban government in Afghanistan, while India supports the Northern Alliance, Blair's proposals include a more broad-based govern-

Pursestrings open wider for Pakistan

■ **WASHINGTON:** A US Senate panel on Thursday rewarded Pakistan for its cooperation with American anti-terrorism efforts, approving legislation to ease military and other aid to that country over the next two years. The Senate committee's action came after President Bush announced a \$100 million aid package for Pakistan.

■ **NEW DELHI:** External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh today said on BBC's *Hard Talk* programme that Washington is currently employing Islamabad as a "tool" while accepting the "ground reality" (of Pakistan sponsoring terrorism). Singh also said that "no international coalition, international body or any international view can affect or interfere in the internal affairs of J and K."

ment to include all ethnic tribes.

In Islamabad, speaking to reporters after an hour-long meeting with Pak President General Pervez Musharraf, Blair said: "We have agreed that if the current Taliban regime fails to yield up bin Laden and it falls, then its successor must be broad-based with every key ethnic group being represented including the Pashtuns."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Musharraf with Blair after their one-hour meeting before the British PM left for New Delhi. Reuters

The West's amnesia towards Pakistan defies belief

Eyes wide shut

BY PREM SHANKAR JHA

HF-8
5/10
WS (W)

SINCE SEPTEMBER 11, the US has been in a dilemma between two kinds of response to the threat posed by international terrorism. Bush is under political pressure to extract vengeance and find a 'quick fix' solution. That pressure has made him focus relentlessly on Osama bin Laden, and the Taliban.

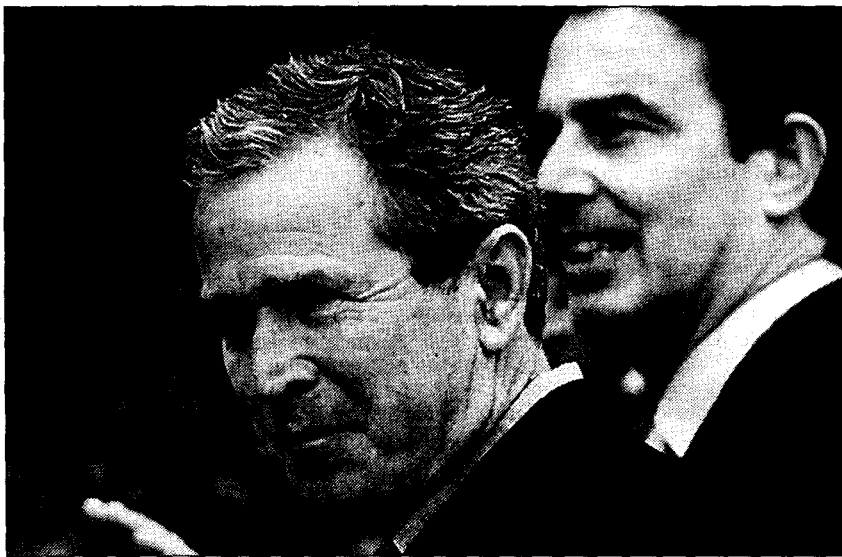
Professionals are unanimous that the fight against terrorism cannot be fought against one person, one organisation or in one country. Terrorists have no State, but belong to networks that are interlocked, porous and spread across many countries. They can only be fought by creating an opposing network of the intelligence agencies and military assets of all States that are, or could be, threatened by terrorists; by identifying and destroying terrorist nodes, and breaking the links that join them.

The speeches of Colin Powell, General Shelton and others have reflected this growing awareness, but as of today the conflict between the two alternative strategies remains unresolved. And that conflict is once more resulting in American actions that threaten to drive a wedge between the US and India. The wedge is taking the form of a revival of military and economic relations between the US and Pakistan. It's a dizzyingly rapid rehabilitation of Pakistan from the nether zones of a failing near-terrorist State to a darling of the western alliance in this new 'war' against terrorism!

Within the space of two weeks, the US has gone back on an earlier decision to lift post-Pokhran sanctions on only India and has lifted them on both India and Pakistan. It has also piloted the rescheduling (and thereby partial write-off) of \$ 30 billion of Pakistan's debt. Equally significant is the sudden love affair of the European Union with Pakistan. Musharraf's promise of wholehearted support of the US against Afghanistan was followed by the descent on Islamabad of high level EU dignitaries, who went away utterly charmed and had no difficulty in agreeing to rescheduling Pakistan's debt.

Musharraf's response to these huge concessions could hardly have given American and European policy makers any comfort. He soon announced that his government will not break its diplomatic ties with the Taliban. His foreign minister warned other nations, that is, Russia, the CIS States and the US, not to support the Northern Alliance. Musharraf also said that Pakistan would not allow its bases to be used by the US for any attack on Afghanistan.

But all this has not yet given rise to any second thoughts in Washington or the EU



BROTHERS IN ARMS: George W. Bush with Tony Blair

capitals. Only hours after Pakistan's spate of announcements, the US agreed to supply it with military hardware and sophisticated electronic surveillance equipment. Powell has offered Pakistan helicopter gunships to patrol the Afghan border. This has been followed by the proposed visit of Tony Blair to Islamabad reportedly on Friday.

Believe it or not, Blair is going to discuss ways to bridge the gap between Pakistan and the Northern Alliance in the fight against the Taliban. Blair seems to have conveniently forgotten that between 100,000 and 150,000 Pakistanis have spent the last decade fighting with the Taliban against the alliance.

To Indians, this is like revisiting a nightmare. Although so far the US has promised only \$ 50 million worth of military equipment, few of India's policy makers have forgotten that military aid to Pakistan under the Baghdad Pact also started with a mere \$ 50 million in 1955. By the time Pakistan decided to use American hardware to launch the 1965 war, this aid had exceeded a billion dollars. Powell's offer of helicopter gunships suggests that the process of inflation has begun. There are no prizes for guessing which border they will monitor.

Blair's visit to Pakistan is also a part of the nightmare. Few Indians have forgotten that no country worked harder in 1948 to convince the Security Council members in New York and the American state department in Washington to ignore the Instrument of Accession, turn a blind eye to Pakistan's brazen military grab at

Kashmir, and force India to accept a resolution that put it on a legal and moral par with Pakistan in the search for a solution in Kashmir. Britain's sudden re-entry in South Asia will reinforce Musharraf's bid to make the West turn a blind eye to the *jehadis* in Kashmir on the grounds that this is 'a struggle for independence'.

For India, most ominous of all is the West's silence after Musharraf's warning that the so-called *jihad* in Kashmir is not terrorism. Not only did this not bring any denial from Washington, but the issue was evaded by American ambassador Robert Blackwill in a TV interview on Star TV. The silence has endured even after the calculated two-week lull in Lashkar and Jaish activities in Kashmir was broken by two *fidayeen* attacks on Sunday and Monday that killed not only five soldiers, several CRPF men, and five Kashmiri policemen, but more than 20 Kashmiri civilians.

How this, or the deaths at the hands of 'insurgents' of more than 9,800 civilians over the last 11 years, squares with the notion of a struggle for independence, or with the explicit description of terrorism by the US and UN as attacks on civilians, remains utterly obscure.

The self-serving amnesia of the West towards Pakistan defies belief. If the war against terrorism requires cooperation between a large number of States to build an intelligence and military 'counter-network', then this cooperation must be voluntary. In Pakistan's case alone, it had to be *purchased*.

In Pakistan's case, it could easily be

counterproductive. Intelligence acquired through such cooperation is likely to be flawed and information of joint actions planned with such a partner is likely to be leaked to the opponent. Surely, the state department could not have forgotten that Ramzi Youssef evaded three traps set for him by the Pakistani police and FBI because he had been tipped off in advance. Who tipped off Osama in 1998 when the Americans could bomb only empty camps?

Washington has also forgotten that 2001 is not 1980. In 1980, Pakistan suffered from no conflict of interest because the interests of the Afghan Mujahideen, the US, and its own, were in perfect alignment. That alignment was destroyed not on September 11, but eight years earlier when one bunch of Deobandi Islamic zealots trained in Pakistani *madrasas* and owing allegiance to Pakistani political parties turned their guns on America while another turned them on Kashmir and India.

Ramzi Youssef, who made the first attempt to blow up the World Trade Center in 1993, the assassin of two CIA operatives in Langley, the five terrorists who almost blew up 10 United Airlines jets in the far east in 1994, and the Dar-es Salaam and Nairobi bombers of 1998, all had return air tickets to Karachi, presumably en route to Peshawar. The last bombing was unequivocally traced to Osama.

The same terrorist network has spread seamlessly into Kashmir. On May 27 and 28, 1999, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Independent* of London, carried stories they attributed to "western intelligence sources" to the effect that a loose international network coordinated by Pakistan's ISI, embracing a wide range of terrorist organisations from Algeria to Egypt to central Asia and Afghanistan, was behind the Pakistani incursion into Kargil.

When banned by the US for its links with Bin Laden, the Harkat-ul-Ansar resurfaced as the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. Following September 11, the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen has merged seamlessly into the Jaish-e-Mohammed. The Jaish is part of a four organisation *jehadi* network that calls itself the 'Army of Islam', and contains the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba, the Al Badr Mujahideen and the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. This 'army' is connected to Bin Laden's Al Qaeda and the ISI.

All this makes it impossible for Pakistan to give its support to the West without giving up the *jihad* in Kashmir and running the risk of a '*jihad* against itself' within Pakistan. The West will learn this soon but by then it will have invested too much in the Pakistan connection and too many careers will be at stake for it to admit its mistake and change tack.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 OCT 2002

W W
H F S
Hot pursuit, cold war 5/10

ALL THROUGH the Cold War, the Americans had allies who were no less tyrannical than those on the other side of the Iron Curtain. Yet, the US winked at their follies since they were its partners in the battle against communism. The Pakistani military dictators had a pride of place among them. Now history appears to be repeating itself. The US has again cosied up to another military dictator in Islamabad. And the price he is trying to extract is that Washington should not be too inquisitive about the background of the 'freedom fighters' in Kashmir. Although the latest terrorist outrage in Kashmir has caused some embarrassment even in Pakistan, the US has been careful not to link the perpetrator, Jaish-e-Mohammed, directly with Pakistan. The CNN has even desisted from describing the suicide squad as terrorists. Instead, it has used words like militants, guerrillas and rebels.

That there is some recognition in the US of India's contention that terrorists cannot be selectively targeted is evident from Colin Powell's remark that "we are going after terrorism in a comprehensive way". America's cautious approach is understandable since it is aware of the difficulties under which General Pervez Musharraf is functioning. In fact, India had told Pakistan that it did not

want to add to its problems at this stage. However, the *fidayeen* attack in Srinagar is bound to raise doubts about whether a country like Pakistan, which has sponsored terrorism for so many years, can suddenly turn over a new leaf. As much has been noted by an American analyst who has said that "it is delusional to think that the US can reform the Musharraf regime or elements in the Taliban into responsible partners to fight terrorism".

The question, therefore, is whether the US is again making the mistake it made during the Cold War of not being too choosy about its friends. It may not have mattered then because the dictators in its camp confined their repression to their own countries. But now Pakistan and Afghanistan not only nurture terrorists but also send them out in different directions — to Kashmir, Chechnya and so on — to wage their *jihad*. The objective of Operation Enduring Freedom should not only be the safety of the US, but the whole world should feel safe. In fact, unless all the nests of vipers in Pakistan and Afghanistan are destroyed, the US cannot be fully safe. Nor is it advisable to argue that Osama bin Laden should be tackled first before taking on the others. Since they all spring from the same poisonous root, they must all be crushed together. /

Bush deploys Big Two for diplomatic offensive

6/1 11/10
FROM AMIT ROY IN LONDON,
IDREES BAKHTIAR IN
ISLAMABAD AND REUTERS

Oct. 3: America has mounted a diplomatic offensive whose scale and sweep is matching the massive military build-up in the hunt for Osama bin Laden, sending a top defence official to West Asia, persuading its closest ally to visit Pakistan and holding direct talks with the opposition alliance in Afghanistan. (WR)

US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld landed in Saudi Arabia tonight as part of a support-building tour that will also take him to Oman, Egypt and Uzbekistan. British Prime Minister Tony Blair is expected to arrive on Friday in Pakistan, the only country still recognising the Taliban, to cement further Bush's coalition against terrorism.

Sources in Delhi said Blair, who will also visit Moscow, may touch down in Delhi if a schedule could be worked out. Blair, who will meet foreign minister Jaswant Singh who reached London today, spoke to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee during the day. (See Page 8)

Though the noose appeared to tighten around the Taliban, the presence of Blair and Rumsfeld in the region is likely to give the Afghan militia some breathing space before a possible US military strike. It is unlikely that Washington will launch any operation until both have left.

But analysts said the time window for military action in Afghanistan is narrowing fast and several indicators point to a possible strike any time from early next week.

Pakistan said it had received from the US the first batch of evidence that Washington says links bin Laden to the attacks. But Pakistan added that it could not yet say whether the first instalment proved his guilt.

THE TELEGRAPH

4 OCT 2001

Pentagon to minimise use of Pak bases

US
SC
A/10
DESIKAN THIRUNARAYANAPURAM
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 3. - The Pentagon plans to minimise use of Pakistani bases in a military strike against the Taliban, fearing that an extensive deployment there could destabilise a critical but volatile ally, the New York Times reported today.

Quoting senior Bush administration officials, the paper said US and Pakistani officials are concerned about the growing anti-American sentiment in the region. They are now planning on a much more modest use of Pakistan's installations. Pentagon officials have been scrambling to make new logistical arrangements, *The Times* said.

The defence secretary, Mr Donald H Rumsfeld, left today on a three-day trip to Saudi Arabia, Oman, Egypt and Uzbekistan to discuss basing rights and other military issues. Pakistan was conspicuously absent from his itinerary.

US officials have sought access to bases in some former Soviet republics in Central Asia, like Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and in the Persian Gulf.

Quoting a Pentagon official, the paper said the

USA had encountered "bumps in the road" in working out military arrangements in the region, and the administration had decided to send Mr Rumsfeld to negotiate.

Pakistan's political fragility has forced the Pentagon to look for other staging areas and ways to improvise how America's military could plug the gap. "The fear in Pakistan is clear-cut: a large US military presence might provoke Islamic radicals into an uprising that threatens its government," *The Times* report said.

The Pentagon has dispatched an aircraft carrier, the Kitty Hawk, to the Arabian Sea to serve as a mobile offshore base for ground troops, including special operations forces.

Was USA planning to make use of bases within Pakistan? A senior administration official said: "We are working very hard not to. And if we do, we want to be very discreet. We do not want to destabilise the Pakistani government. They have been very cooperative so far."

A Pakistani official said the USA had not asked permission to station ground troops in Pakistan and that he did not expect the US military to deploy fighter jets, bombers for extended periods of time.

THE STATESMAN

4 OCT 2001

Bush hints at support for Palestinian state



Israeli soldiers carry the body of one of the two Palestinian gunmen shot in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday. — AP/PTI

ROLAND WATSON AND CHRISTOPHER WALKER
THE TIMES, LONDON

WASHINGTON/JERUSALEM, Oct. 3. — Mr George W Bush yesterday held out the prospect of US support for an independent Palestinian state as the future of the West Asia peace process was thrust into the centre of US efforts to build a global coalition against terror.

Mr Bush's move broke new ground for his administration, which has been criticised for shying away from direct involvement, and risked alienating Israeli opinion. But in its search for allies among moderate Arab states, Washington has come under intense pressure to engage in the process. Mr Bush reflected

such pressure yesterday, saying a Palestinian state should be one of the goals of a balanced peace process.

He said: "The idea of a Palestinian state has always been a part of a vision, so long as the right of Israel to exist is respected." The Bush administration emphasised that his comments were not directly aimed at coalition building.

They said the secretary of state, Gen Colin Powell, had been preparing Washington's intervention before 11 September, but the initiative had been overtaken by the suicide hijackings. However, there were signs that Washington's move was part of a wider effort to secure the backing of Arab states for war on terrorism.

Mr Tony Blair used his

speech to Labour's conference in Brighton yesterday to hold out the prospect of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel "as equal partners".

Mr Bush tried to forestall criticism from Israel, by saying progress in West Asia was "made in centimetres" and that he was not advocating a new tack in the peace process. He said the Mitchell proposal provided a "viable blueprint" for a settlement which "most of the world agrees with as the necessary path to ultimately solving the West Asia problems."

Mr Ranaan Gissin, chief spokesman for the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr Ariel Sharon, said he wasn't surprised by the fact the Bush

administration had publicly supported the idea of a Palestinian state. "We were aware that such a plan was circulating on paper in the state department. In fact, only last month Mr Sharon made clear that we were also prepared to offer the Palestinians a state — something that others in the past like the British, Egyptians and Jordanians had never been prepared to do," Mr Gissin said.

He emphasised that the state envisaged by Israel would be subject to rigid security controls to prevent entry of troops or posed to Israel or forming of treaties with hostile states. "The point is that this sort of solution can only be considered once violence from the Palestinian side has stopped," he added.

THE STATESMAN

4 OCT 2001

US (W)
HD-11

Pentagon beefs up war machinery

By Sridhar Krishnaswami 4/10

WASHINGTON, OCT. 3. With the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, on a four-nation tour of West and Central Asia, as part of the final preparations for a strike against Afghanistan, the Pentagon is going about the routine of beefing up the war machinery in and around the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea. More than 2200 National Guards and Reserves have been called up for active duty bringing the total to over 22,000 as of date.

The administration is keen on keeping the Taliban militia guessing as to what is in the offing. Militarily, more than two aircraft carriers are in place, a third is on the way and a fourth is in the Mediterranean. More than 350 planes are available for combat, not to speak of the more heavy bombers in Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Elite commandos of Britain and the U.S. are believed to be on the ground in Afghanistan and in neighbouring Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Terrorist camps

AFP, AP report:

The Washington Times today reported quoting unidentified U.S. defence officials that intelligence operatives had identified 23 "terrorist

training camps" in Afghanistan that had been targeted for military action. It said a small number of warplanes, tanks and anti-aircraft missile sites belonging to the Taliban had also been tagged for action by U.S. forces massing in South Asia, according to the officials. The training camps were reportedly located in northeast Afghanistan, under areas where the opposition Northern Alliance is active, as well as in the east and the south, near Kabul and the cities of Jalalabad and Khost.

In presenting its case against Osama bin Laden to U.S. allies, the Bush administration said some of the terrorists involved in the Sept. 11 attack had also been linked to the east Africa embassy bombings and the attack on the USS Cole. Two senior administration officials said this was part of a presentation made on Tuesday by the State Department counter-terrorism chief, Mr. Frank Taylor, to NATO allies in Brussels. The presentation was part of the U.S. campaign to garner international support for its contention that Osama bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda organisation were responsible for the terror attacks. Several hijackers involved in the attacks three weeks ago had links to Al-Qaeda, the officials said.

The Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, said information was sent out on Monday to a large number of nations which "powerfully made the case" against the Al-Qaeda organisation for the terrorist attacks three weeks ago.

"We traced the history of this organisation, its recent activities and events around the 11th — before and after. I think it's a persuasive case," he said, speaking with reporters after a meeting with the Greek Foreign Minister.

The NATO allies had conditioned material support for the U.S. under the NATO charter on convincing information that the attacks were directed from abroad.

U.S. request to NATO

A Reuters report from Brussels, quoting a NATO spokesman, said the U.S. presented a first list of requests for practical assistance to its NATO allies today in response to the attacks. He declined to give details except to say the requests were part of the campaign against international terrorism and it was up to each of the 18 other allies to decide how it could help.

"The United States made a collective request to NATO this morning at the North Atlantic Council meeting," the spokesman told reporters.

SEARCHED

1 4 OCT 2001

W (N)
49-16
8/10

Forces ready for mission: Bush

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

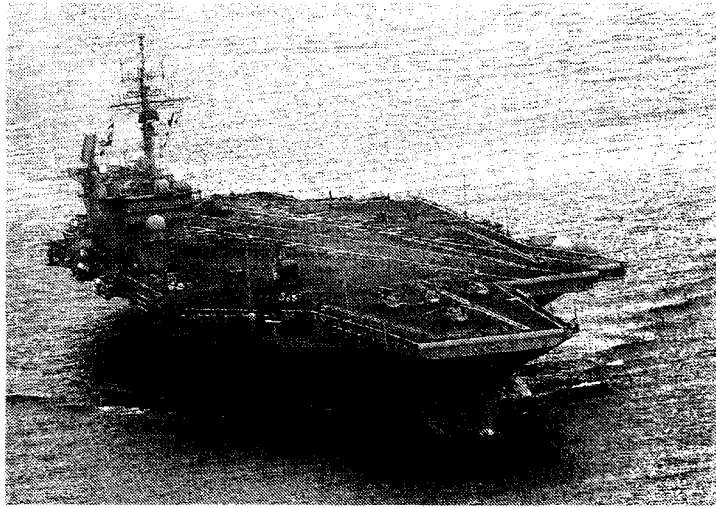
WASHINGTON, OCT. 2. The Pentagon has dispatched the third aircraft carrier in the direction of the Arabian Sea even as the Bush administration is studying various options, political and military, in its war on terrorism. A fourth carrier is in the Mediterranean and could be moved at short notice, it is maintained.

The USS Kitty Hawk has left its base in Japan and the word is that many of its support vessels, especially the air components, will be joining it en route from other parts of Japan. The Pentagon is said to be beefing up its military might in the area against the backdrop of uncertain allies in West Asia and beyond.

"We're making progress", the President, Mr. George W. Bush, remarked. Administration officials now point to the fact that two aircraft carriers — besides the Kitty Hawk — accompanying ships, some 30,000 troops, a Marine Amphibious force and about 350 aircraft have been deployed in and around Afghanistan, in the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea and the forward bases of the U.S.

There is at least one good reason for the Pentagon to move a third aircraft carrier. It virtually assures the U.S. of the ability to fight a major war in the area with or without the assistance of bordering nations of Afghanistan, if it really came to a crunch. The aircraft carriers can wage a full-fledged war including the stationing and airlifting of thousands of troops if need be.

Military analysts are saying that in addition to the aircraft avail-



CAMPAIGN...SHIPSHAPE:The aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk sails on the Uraga Channel, southwest of Tokyo, after leaving the nearby Yokosuka Naval Base, the home port of the U.S. Seventh Fleet, recently. — AP

able in the carriers, the U.S. has moved its heavy set B-52s and the B-1 bombers to the Indian Ocean base of Diego Garcia. The conventional heavy duty bombers like the B-52 will be called upon to mount massive air strikes against targets inside Afghanistan and substantially boost operations by the Special Forces.

The impression is that if the President gives the go-ahead, the operation inside Afghanistan is going to be short and severe. By all accounts, it will not be a long-drawn-out conventional warfare involving thousands of troops. Special forces of the U.S. and Britain are already deep inside Afghanistan probing the hideouts of Osama bin Laden and the Al Qaeda.

The air power will augment

what is now being done on the ground, it is said. As it is, small groups of highly trained special forces are operating out of Pakistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

Aside from striking capability, small teams are also being readied for reconnaissance and rescue in the event of a major showdown.

"This is a different kind of war. It is hard to fight a guerilla war with conventional forces, but our military is ready", Mr. Bush remarked at the Federal Emergency Management Agency here.

At different times, the President has sought to emphasise that the war on terrorism may not be witnessed on television screens; and that some of the successes will not even be publicised.

Japanese forces to aid U.S. battle

us (2)
By Amit Baruah HP-16/2/10

SINGAPORE, OCT. 2. The Japanese Prime Minister, Mr. Junichiro Koizumi, believes that the participation of his country's troops in a logistical role in support of the American battle against terrorism will not create uncertainty in East Asia.

Mr. Koizumi's remarks come after the Chinese Government expressed concern about Japanese plans to take a more activist role in its cooperation with the United States.

"Japan's stance on the terrorist attacks in the United States is designed to join the framework of international efforts to root out terrorism... therefore, it will not be a factor to make the Asian region uncertain," the Prime Minister was quoted as telling the lower House of Parliament in Tokyo today.

Mr. Koizumi, however, made it clear that he was sensitive to concerns expressed by China and other neighbouring countries in relation to Japan's war past.

"Considering the importance of friendly relations with neighbouring countries, including China and South Korea, we have been explaining to Asian nations about our country's stance appropriately," he said. "We have been paying attention to responses from China and South Korea".

China has been forthright in expressing its concerns about new Japanese proposals. "In the fight against terrorism, the international community faces a common task... on the other hand... due to historical reasons, it's quite obvious that the role that the Japanese Government can play in the military field is a very sensitive question and should be dealt

with in a very prudent manner," a Chinese Government spokesman has been quoted as saying.

During a visit to the United States last week, where he met the American President, Mr. George W. Bush, Mr. Koizumi made it clear that Tokyo would do more to aid the battle against terrorism.

He said Japan would participate in providing medical support, assisting refugees and the task of intelligence gathering. The Prime Minister said he was prepared to put personnel of the Self-Defence Forces (SDF) in harm's way.

"It will not be acceptable (for Japan) to insist that the SDF shouldn't go to dangerous places. It will involve activities that may be dangerous but which ordinary people cannot undertake," Mr. Koizumi said. "So, it will be important to gain the public's understanding that we will send the SDF even though SDF members will probably encounter much hardship."

While noting that Japan would not back away from utilising all the country had at its disposal to prevent terrorism, the Prime Minister made it clear that the SDF will not use force.

He also stated Japan had no intention to go against the country's pacifist Constitution. "The issue is about the right to self-defence by the United States and what Japan should do within the framework of international cooperation."

In a related development, an *Asahi Shimbun* survey showed that 46 per cent of Japanese respondents opposed plans of the Koizumi Government to send the SDF to provide logistical support to the U.S. military. Forty-two per cent, however, said the SDF should be sent overseas.

Arabs view campaign with suspicion

By Kesava Menon

MANAMA (BAHRAIN), OCT. 2. Despite protestations from Washington and elsewhere that the campaign being currently waged is against terrorism and terrorism alone, the perception that it is being directed at the Islamic world is gaining ground. Those who express this view point to the alacrity with which the U.S. has identified Al Qaeda as the perpetrator of the September 11 attacks and to the reports of harassment that Arabs and Muslims in the West suffered subsequently.

Almost all the Governments of West Asian States have stated that they would be more comfortable if the U.S. presented the evidence that it says it has to prove that Osama bin Laden and his organisation, Al Qaeda, were behind the attacks. Few in this part of the world think that the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair's statement that he has seen the proof and is convinced by it is good enough. Arab commentators also note that U.S. officials had pointed to an Arab or Muslim link soon after the Oklahoma bombing only for it to be proved subsequently that the attack was the work of a U.S. citizen.

No government in this region cares much about what happens to Bin Laden. He represents a threat to the monarchies and the



VOX POPULI?: The Hezbollah secretary general, Mr. Hassan Nassrallah, speaks at a hotel in Beirut on Tuesday, at the opening of an Islamic conference under the slogan: "Yes for Resistance, No for Terrorism". — AFP

one-party dominated republics that make up the Arab world. Despite U.S. efforts to find a link between Bin Laden and the Iraqi Government, it is unlikely that the secularists in Baghdad want to have anything to do with Al Qaeda beyond exploring the possibility of using the outfit to embarrass the United States.

However, the Arab regimes once again find themselves under pressure from the street. Either because of his own efforts or because the U.S. has turned him into their No. 1. enemy, Bin Laden has become the symbol for all the festering grudges and resentment

that people in the Arab world nurse against the U.S.

If the U.S. were to proceed against Bin Laden

without presenting the evidence that they claim to have, the Arab world will almost certainly believe that the U.S. is applying double standards. There is bound to be a reassertion of the comparison between the treatment that the U.S. accords to Israel and to people in the Arab world. Even some of the reasonable

leaders in the Arab world have drawn attention to the fact that the U.S. has applied no pressure on Israel despite evidence that it has "terrorised" Palestinians. They question how, under such circumstances, the U.S. can proceed against Bin Laden without proof.

Arab governments have also expressed the wish, it can hardly be termed a demand since there is no chance that it will be accepted, that any action taken should be under the aegis of the United Nations. Once again Arab Governments appear to be walking a tight rope since they know that the U.S. will not hand over the leadership of the campaign to anyone else while at the same time the Arab population does not want to follow the U.S. in any action against another Muslim country.

THE HINDU

3 OCT 2001

US ultimatum to Taliban

AGENCIES

SP1 3/10

W2

WASHINGTON/ISLAMABAD, Oct. 2. — President George W Bush today issued an ultimatum to the Taliban telling it to hand over Osama bin Laden or face the consequences, as the US ambassador to Pakistan discussed with General Pervez Musharraf the probe into the attacks.

In Kabul, the Taliban said it was ready for talks with the USA but iterated that it would not hand over Osama without concrete proof against him.

At the White House, Mr Bush said: "The Taliban must turn over Osama.... and destroy the terrorist camps. They must do so, otherwise, there will be a consequence." He ruled out more negotiations and vowed to take action. "There's no calendar....

TO MOM, WITH LOVE?

LONDON, Oct. 2. — Two days before the attacks on the USA, Osama bin Laden told his adopted mother to expect "big news." "In two days you're going to hear big news and you're not going to hear from me for a while," the *Daily Telegraph* said today, quoting NBC. A foreign Intelligence service had intercepted the call between Osama and his adopted mother. — PTI

■ Photographs, more reports on pages 5 & 8

We'll act on our time."

Ms Chamberlain discussed the issue of evidence against Osama with Gen. Musharraf, an US of-

ficial said. But no evidence was shown or submitted. He declined to divulge details of the discussions over US plans to attack Afghanistan.

A Pakistani foreign office spokesman said his country had not got detailed evidence on persons involved in the attacks or their links with Bin Laden and Al-Qaida. "We're interested in sharing the evidence," he said.

Allies strike Iraq

Western warplanes hit an anti aircraft artillery site in southern Iraq today in the second such attack in five days, a US official said, reports Reuters from Dubai. The strike was "in response to hostile Iraq threats against US and British military warplanes," he said.

THE STATESMAN

3 OCT 2001

W9
FD-17

U.S. response upsets NATO allies

By Batuk Gathani

8/10

BRUSSELS, Oct. 2. America's allies in Europe have thus far responded positively to the Bush administration's proposal to form a global alliance against international terrorism. However, some are peeved that the U.S. administration has failed to take up NATO's "historic offer" to implement Article V, according to which an attack on one member is deemed to be an attack on all the members.

This display of solidarity is considered unprecedented in the alliance's 52-year-old history.

There is a view in Europe that the Bush administration's response has been cool to the NATO offer.

The U.S., on the other hand, is keen to avoid the confusion and feuds that took place during the Koso-

vo operation. As an American observer put it, "In the effort to avoid too many cooks, the Bush administration has left the Europeans worried about the stew." Though there are suspicions on both sides of the Atlantic, it will be premature to suggest that there are cracks within the NATO.

The European governments have already announced measures to tackle security challenges.

The European Union governments are to bring in anti-money laundering measures aimed at clamping down on funds resources of terrorist organisations.

These measures will be discussed at the G-7 Finance Ministers' meeting in the U.S. later this week. The German Chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schroeder has called for relaxing bank secrecy rules to track down terrorist groups.

THE HINDU

3 OCT 2001

HD-17
8/10

Russia warns CIS to stay out of U.S. strikes

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, OCT. 2. Russia has urged former Soviet republics to refrain from taking part in the planned U.S. military operation in Afghanistan. Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States should not participate "in military action in Afghanistan", the Itar-Tass news agency quoted the Russian security service chief as saying after a two-day meeting of CIS security and intelligence chiefs in Dushanbe, capital of Tajikistan.

The head of the Federal Security Service, Mr. Nikolai Patrushev, said on Tuesday that he believed none of the CIS member-States was willing to take part in the U.S. operation in Afghanistan. "He stressed that CIS countries should not provide army and security units or offer their military airfields for the U.S. military operation in Afghanistan," Itar-Tass said. According to Mr. Patrushev, CIS members should participate in the fight against terrorism mainly by sharing intelligence information with the U.S.

The statement reflected Russia's concerns that the U.S. could take advantage of the planned strikes in Afghanistan to recarve in its favour the spheres of influence in Central Asia. Russian media cited Kremlin sources as being "extremely upset" by Uzbekistan's offer of military facilities to the U.S.

THE HINDU

- 3 OCT 2001

'Bush okays oust-Taliban plan'

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD/WASHINGTON, Oct. 1. — The Taliban has stepped up its defiance of the US demand to hand over Osama bin Laden, saying they're holding him at a secret place and ignoring threats of retaliation.

The stalemate seems to have raised the possibilities of a US-led strikes that an Afghan Opposition leader said could come in a few days. Saudi Arabia, a key US ally, has however said it wouldn't allow foreign forces to attack Afghanistan from its soil.

The US President has approved a covert plan to strengthen anti-Taliban forces, the *New York Times* said. The covert aid would strengthen the Northern Alliance and aim at stirring up resistance among Pashtun tribals in the south. "The purpose is to enhance their ability to move against the Taliban," the daily quoted an official as having said.

"It isn't limited to political support."

The Bush administration had yesterday hinted that it would work to replace the Taliban unless it accepted the demand to

PAK AIR FORCE VACATES QUETTA BASE

ISLAMABAD, Oct. 1. — Pakistan air force has removed all its aircraft from Quetta airport that has been taken over by the army, the *News* said. Quetta is likely to be a staging post for a US-led attack on Afghanistan.

Pakistan today said any US campaign against Afghanistan would be aimed at terrorism, not the Afghans. "The whole campaign is against terrorism," the foreign ministry spokesman, Mr Riaz Mohammad Khan, said.

The *Frontier Post* today said General Pervez Musharraf would visit Kandahar soon to persuade the Taliban chief to hand over Osama bin Laden to the USA. But a foreign office spokesman denied the report, saying: "I don't think it requires really a great deal of consideration... Whatever we could do we have been doing." The paper said Islamabad saw another chance of a diplomatic initiative to end the crisis after the Taliban claimed Osama was in Afghanistan under its "control" — **Agencies**

hand over Osama. The White House chief of staff, Mr Andrew Card, said: "The Taliban has been harbouring terrorists. If they adhere to that policy, they should be out of power."

The USA has been adding to its gathering might in the Afghan region. The *USS Kitty Hawk*, an aircraft carrier with about 70 warplanes, sailed from Tokyo today to join "Operation Enduring Freedom".

An Iranian navy commander

said yesterday 41 US and British warships had arrived in the Gulf and the Sea of Oman and were being monitored for any signs of attack on Afghanistan.

Strike plans: Washington has shelved plans for bombing raids on Afghanistan because of a shortage of viable targets, opting instead to deploy special forces, *Newsweek* reports.

"The terrorist camps have emptied; the only good military

targets, apart from a few TV and radar stations, militia headquarters and fuel dumps, are the Taliban's 'cavalry' of pickup trucks mounted with machine guns and rocket launchers."

US reports have claimed that special forces units had entered Afghanistan to collect intelligence on Osama, his Al-Qaida group and the Taliban.

Warning: The US attorney general, Mr John Ashcroft, has warned of more terrorist attacks on the USA if it retaliates against the Taliban. "We believe there are substantial risks of terrorism still in the USA. As we as a nation respond to what has happened to us, those risks may, in fact, go up."

Assets frozen: Britain has frozen \$88 million of assets linked to the Taliban regime, a report from Brighton says.

Fernandes fearful: Any US strike on Afghanistan may lead to "strong disturbances" in India, Mr George Fernandes said today in Muzaffarpur.

■ **Editorial: Laughing their way! page 8**

■ **More reports, photographs on page 11**

- 2 OCT 2001

US (2)
10-19

Bush approves covert plan 9/10

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 1. The United States President, Mr. George W. Bush, has given the go-ahead to a covert plan to strengthen the anti-Taliban forces inside Afghanistan, *The New York Times* has reported. The Presidential directive included a \$100-million relief assistance to Afghan refugees.

The covert plan to get rid of the Taliban from Kabul seems to be along expected lines as the Bush administration has been taking a two-pronged approach in recent days — increasing the verbal heat on the extremist outfit and at the same time encouraging the so-called moderate elements in that organisation to defect. Then there is the third approach — openly flirting with the loose coalition of anti-Taliban militia, including the Northern Alliance (NA).

The New York Times, quoting unnamed officials, said the Bush administration was considering airdropping food and essential supplies to the Afghans, who would be reeling under a severe winter. But Washington wants to make sure that the relief does not end up in the hands of the Taliban.

The administration has not made it clear as to how it is going to "strengthen" the anti-Taliban forces, and has not given the impression that Washington was preparing to change



LOOKING FOR WESTERN HELP?: Fighters of Afghanistan's Northern Alliance observe Taliban positions on the frontline some 30 km north of Kabul on Sunday. — AP

the political landscape of that beleaguered country.

The conservatives, who have long criticised the Clinton administration for taking on "nation-building" exercises, are finding themselves in not much of a different situation.

The anti-Taliban operation will have support in Congress, where Republicans have been questioning the attitude and role of the U.S. over the last several years.

In fact, leading Republicans have told the former Afghan King Zahir Shah in Rome that Capitol Hill would favour economic efforts to

get Afghanistan back on its feet from more than 20 years of conflict.

The President's go-ahead to the plan came after a National Security Council "guidance" identified and laid the basis of the goals in Afghanistan, one of the prime ones being the ouster of the Taliban regime, given its links to terrorists.

At the same time, it was pointed out that the administration did not wish to be in a position of "choosing sides", an effort many see as being counter-productive given the psyche of the Afghan people.

For all the offers by the NA of spearheading the military offensive, the Bush administration has been slow to respond and for good reasons. The NA is not exactly a popular alternative in Kabul, given its domination by Tajiks and Uzbeks. And politically, Washington has to be sensitive to Islamabad's viewpoint on the subject.

In all the noises about beefing-up military forces in the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea and in forward bases, the U.S. has said that the "war" was against terrorists, not against Islam or the people of Afghanistan. It is for this reason that the administration is coming out with a large package on refugee assistance, in addition to being the largest donor of humanitarian assistance to that country.

THE HINDU

2 OCT 2001

Congressional team meets Zahir Shah

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 30. As the Bush administration is intensifying the coalition-building process against international terrorism, a bipartisan group of law-makers met the former King of Afghanistan, Mr. Zahir Shah, in Rome today. The 11-member Congressional delegation from the House of Representatives has in it some known supporters of Mr. Shah.

Mr. Shah told members of Congress that he was on the side of the U.S. in its fight against terrorism and would back all efforts to get rid of the Taliban regime in Kabul. "We have a common struggle against terrorism," he is reported to have told the law-makers.

The Congressional delegation was led by the Republican lawmaker, Mr. Curt Weldon, who has said that while Mr. Shah would prefer the U.N. to play a role, he did not dismiss the idea that in case the world body did not agree, the U.S. and its allies would liberate his country.

The message that the law-makers are conveying is that Mr. Shah must step up efforts for a political alternative in Kabul and the U.S. Congress is ready to help in the rebuilding of the war-torn country. The delegation, however, has made it clear that it is not speaking on behalf of the White House.

"I can tell you, in Congress we know what you are doing and if you help us to overthrow this Taliban tyranny and bring to justice Osama bin Laden, we will do right by you this time," the Republican Congressman, Mr. Dana Rohra-

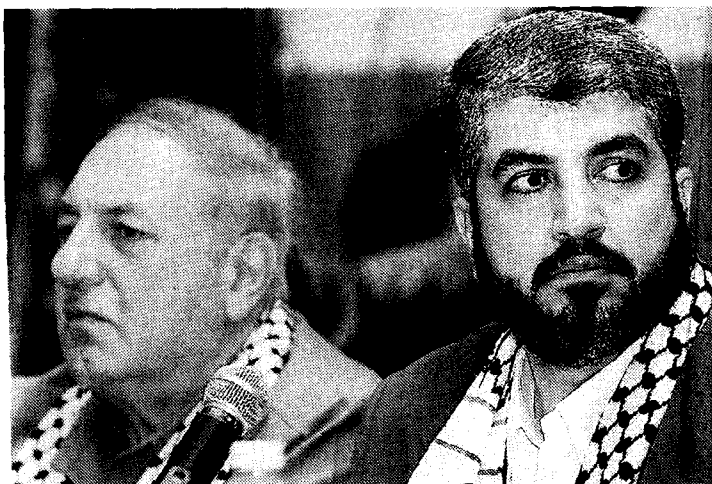
bacher told a gathering of Afghan elders and military commanders. "Congress will help you to rebuild your society," he said.

The timing of the delegation meeting Mr. Shah is seen as important in many circles here, including the official establishment. Mr. Shah has already met several of Afghanistan's non-Taliban political and military leaders in recent days and is toying with the idea of convening a Grand Council of Elders, known as Loya Jirga, in a bid to put together a National Unity Government.

In all the public and private meetings that the Bush administration has had with Mr. Shah, there is also the open acknowledgement that the Northern Alliance is upset over the fact that the West is trying to prop up Mr. Zahir Shah, knowing full well that it is the Northern Alliance that is capable of taking on the Taliban.

While almost all non-Taliban groups have been asking Washington to tell Pakistan to stay out of Afghanistan's internal affair, Islamabad has made it known in blunt terms that any flirting with the Northern Alliance is unacceptable and it will not allow a "hostile regime" to take shape on its borders.

In the midst of all the political manoeuvrings, the military commanders of the Northern Alliance have been openly advising the Bush administration that if the present moment was not taken advantage of, the U.S. will not achieve its objective of ousting the Taliban and capturing Osama bin Laden.



SPITTING FIRE: Mr. Khaled Mishaal, head of the Hamas political bureau (right), denounces the Arafat-Peres meeting saying Israel does not understand the language of negotiations but rather that of force and resistance at the opening of a one-day Palestinian forum to support the uprising in Damascus on Sunday. Mr. Ahmad Jibril, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General Command, (PFLP-GC), is also seen. — AP

Taliban will pay a price: Rumsfeld

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 30. At least two important messages were conveyed by senior Cabinet members of the Bush administration today, in the wake of the Taliban's refusal to hand over the Saudi fugitive, Osama bin Laden, and its "willingness" to negotiate the issue with the U.S.

First, the Taliban would indeed pay a "price" if it did not accede to the American demands; and secondly, Washington was determined to unseat the Taliban in Kabul, and if this meant embracing the Northern Alliance, that would be the direction.

The U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr.

Donald Rumsfeld, was categorical in saying that the Taliban would pay a price. "I would think that that ought to be self-evident at this point," he said. He also signalled a clear U.S. interest in embracing the various anti-Taliban groups, including the Northern Alliance.

The hardening of the administration's stance was reinforced by the White House Chief of Staff, Mr. Andrew Card. "We do not want any Government to harbour terrorists. And the Taliban Government has been harbouring terrorists... They should be out of power" should they continue the policies.

The tough statements come

amid reports from Iran that as many as 41 American and British ships have arrived in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman and are being monitored for any sign of attack against Afghanistan.

AFP reports:

Meanwhile, the U.S. Attorney-General, Mr. John Ashcroft, said the country faced a "very serious threat" of additional terrorist attacks which could escalate if it launched retaliatory strikes for the September 11 attacks.

Speaking to CBS television, Mr. Ashcroft said: "We believe that there is the likelihood of additional terrorist activity and it's our job to do whatever we can to disrupt it."

THE HINDU

1 OCT 2001

PLOT HATCHED IN GERMANY; ATTA WAS 'THE AXEL'; THEY LOVED FAST FOOD, HARD LIQUOR

Terror attacks were carefully coordinated by single group over 18 months

By AMY GOLDSTEIN

WASHINGTON: The 19 hijackers who carried out the worst act of terror ever to occur on US soil worked with little outside help as a single, integrated group composed of identifiable leaders and shadowy foot soldiers who prepared for their final day in a tight choreography over 18 months.

Based on early, flawed information from federal investigators, initial accounts depicted an operation that was carried out by four compartmentalized cells of terrorists. And because investigations and neighbors were confused by similar or falsified Arabic names, it now seems clear that only a single hijacker aboard each of the four commandeered aircraft knew how to fly a plane. Just two of the other hijackers—both linked to terrorist Osama bin Laden—had briefly taken flight lessons.

These six men apparently formed the conspiracy's leadership. Records and interviews show that this core group, often separated by thousands of miles, remained in the US the longest and left behind the most visible tracks that, in retrospect, can be seen as highly synchronized preparations.

Some of the leaders were educated, worldly and so intimately connected that three of the four suspected pilots had roomed together in Germany, where they attended the Technical University of Hamburg. Sophisticated as they were, the leaders were clumsy enough in their English and their manners that they repeatedly provoked notice and annoyance while they were in the US.

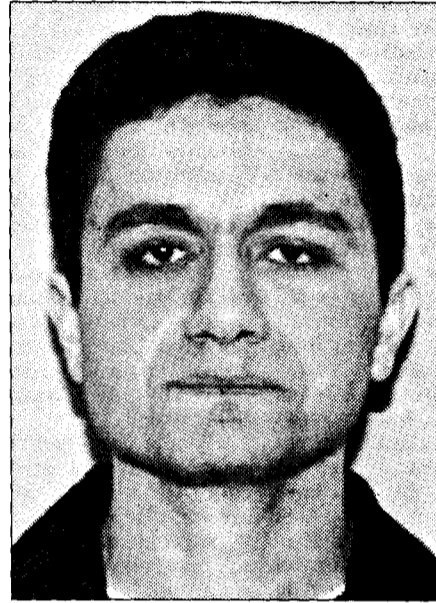
Leader or follower, none of the hijackers brought wives or children with them. And contrary to early reports, none of the pilots had worked for Saudi Arabian Airlines.

The synchronization of their preparations is evident in the most basic ingredients of their plot. Seven of the hijackers obtained Florida driver's licenses within a 15-day span in early summer. Thirteen purchased airline tickets for their final flights within five days in late August. And over the course of the summer, a dozen—who ultimately ended up spread among the four flights—moved through South Florida apartments.

The records left by the hijackers as they carried out these ordinary acts reveal the footprints of the conspiracy. They detail who did what and with whom, and they reveal that the hijackers were divided into two distinct classes. "There are two groups on each plane: You've got the brains, who are the pilots and the leaders, and then you have the muscle coming in later on," said a senior government official. "They were the ones who held the passengers at bay."

This newer portrait of the conspiracy may yet evolve. In particular, an analysis of the hijackers' visible trails gives greater clarity to the role of Mohamed Atta, the 33-year-

old Egyptian lawyer's son already identified by a government official as the "axel" of the plot. He traveled the most, listed the most addresses, took the most practice flights and had the greatest interaction with other conspirators. Atta and two of the other suspected pilots—Marwan Al-Shehhi and Ziad Samir Jarrah—belonged to a radical Islamic student group in Hamburg that investiga-



Malaysia, where they met with bin Laden operatives who were later linked to the bombing of the destroyer USS Cole. By May 2000, they arrived at Sorbi's Flying Club, a small school 20 miles north of San Diego that trains about four dozen pilots a year, and announced that they wanted to learn to fly Boeing airliners.

Almihdhar and Alhazmi were part of the



MASTERMINDS: Mohamed Atta (L) and Algerian Hocine Khouni.

tors believe may have been a birth place of the plot. The hijackers' behavior reveals certain incongruities. They were Islamic fundamentalists who nevertheless indulged in Western culture, from fast food to hard liquor. One spent \$4,500 on a single airline ticket, yet they haggled over bar tabs, car rental fees, and apartment security deposits just days before they would die.

The most basic incongruity, though, is this: The preparations of the 19 hijackers were imperfect. Some were kicked out of pilot schools. Some had to pay cash for their plane tickets after their credit cards were rejected. Two were late for the Boston flight that would be the first to slam into the World Trade Center. But inexact as it was, their plot succeeded in claiming more than 6,000 lives.

In November 1999, two Saudi Arabian men moved into a ground floor apartment at the Parkwood Apartments, a townhouse complex in San Diego near a busy commercial strip. Khalid Almihdhar and Nawaf Alhazmi struck their neighbors as odd. They had no furniture but often carried briefcases and seemed to be on their cell phones a lot.

Two months later, investigators believe, Almihdhar and Alhazmi, traveled to

advance guard. Their flight lessons began within weeks of the day two of the other leaders, Atta and Al-Shehhi, a 23-year-old native of the United Arab Emirates, enrolled in a six-month course at Huffman Aviation, a flying school in Venice, Fla.

A continent apart, the four men displayed uncanny parallels. According to former neighbors, landlords and flight instructors, the California team and the Florida team almost always left their apartments as a pair. Few people recall ever seeing any of them alone. Within each pair, one man assumed a more genial, communicative role, while the other was quieter, brooding. In California, Alhazmi is remembered as more outgoing. In Florida, waitresses and others consistently recall Al-Shehhi as friendlier than Atta—a dour, arrogant man whose English seemed atrocious at times, but suddenly could be smooth when he needed a car or hotel room.

Neither team took pains to be furtive. While Atta occasionally used aliases, all four men gave their real names when they registered for flight lessons or bought airline tickets—a violation of a "terrorist's manual" written for bin Laden's network.

Even as they sought to blend into the United States well enough to complete their necessary tasks, the pairs of men were

imperfect chameleons. At times, they were overeager. They were hindered by faulty English. They were, on occasion, aggressive, even boorish.

In Florida, Atta strived to adapt to US styles, shedding the flowing beard and tunic he had favored in Germany for a clean-cut look. But both he and Al-Shehhi, while more successful than the San Diego pair at acquiring pilots' skills and licenses, could be similarly off-putting. At Huffman, Atta appropriated the seat cushion of a fellow student while he flew in the school's Piper Cherokee Warrior.

If the behavior of the first four was conspicuously unpleasant, they nevertheless were clearly more adept than the young Saudi men who came in a second wave. One of these men, who moved early last summer into a shabby apartment building in Paterson, N.J., once had to ask a neighbor how to screw in a light bulb.

Among the first to arrive were Hamza Alghamdi, 20, and Mohand Alshehri, 23, who in January rented a post office box in Delray Beach, Fla. Most of the second group of conspirators were from poor families. A few had enough education to give them skills that would prove handy. But these younger men seemed to settle under the wings of a leader for such basic needs as finding a place to live. Last winter, Hani Hanjour, another pilot, did the talking when he rented the Paterson apartment with Salem Alhazmi, 21, even though Hanjour's own English was poor. In June, Al-Shehhi, by then a licensed pilot who had been in Florida for at least a year, helped Hamza Alghamdi shop for an apartment, according to the real estate agent who worked with them. Unlike the first wave, who focused on the mentally rigorous work of pilot training, the second wave of young men put time into strengthening their bodies. In Florida and Maryland, they paid cash to train with weights in gyms.

In ways that were curiously out of sync with Islamic orthodoxy, these young men seemed to revel in their brief taste of American life. They wore shorts and T-shirts.

On Aug. 2, at least five—and possible seven—of the hijackers went to a Department of Motor Vehicles office in Arlington, Va., where they allegedly met a local man who fraudulently helped them obtain identification cards they could flash at airport counters. Such close coordination, visible all along, is particularly evident as the conspirators purchased their tickets and moved into their final positions before the attacks.

The last weeks of August and first days of September appear in retrospect as a blur of motion, as hijackers left apartments, returned rental cars and realigned to join the men with whom they would board their planes. (LATWP Svc)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

7 OCT 2001