

Enron falls victim to the deregulation it preached

VIBEKE LAROI
SAN FRANCISCO, NOVEMBER 29

ENRON Corp. once the champion of energy deregulation, has fallen victim to the very volatility that often accompanies the transition from an orderly, regulated marketplace to one that follows the harsh laws of supply and demand.

Enron, until recently the nation's largest energy trader, stood at the brink of one of the biggest corporate collapses in US history on Wednesday as its rescue by rival Dynegy Inc fell apart. "Enron is in some ways the victim of its own success," said Gerald Keenan, lead energy strategy partner at PwC Consulting, part of PricewaterhouseCoopers. "All this wouldn't have occurred if the market wasn't deregulated."

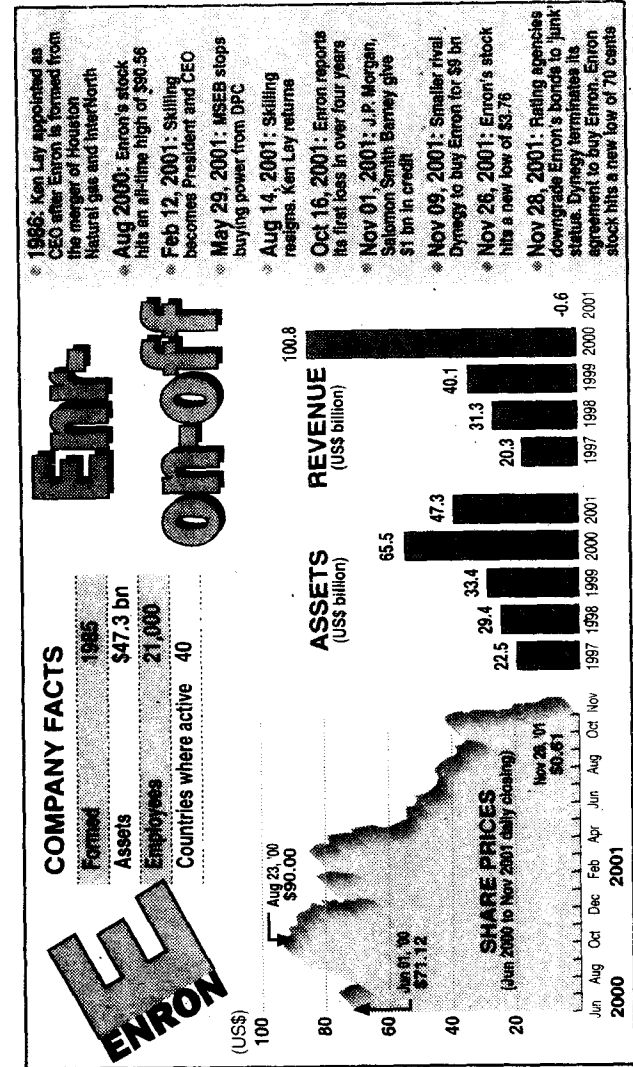
Enron was one of the earliest and most aggressive advocates of power deregulation, which breaks down traditional utility monopolies by letting customers choose their electricity provider, banking on competition to drive down prices. Its aggressive strategies gave Enron 20 per-

cent of the North American electricity and natural gas market, and Enron was ranked No 7 on *Fortune* magazine's list of the biggest US companies.

THE DOWNFALL: But in recent weeks, Enron's credit and debt spiralled out of control as a series of partnerships designed to hide debt off of its balance sheet caused its investors to lose faith.

The partnerships, which included top Enron executives, are the subject of a US Securities and Exchange investigation. In a fluid, competitive marketplace, punishment comes quickly. Enron's share price closed at 61 cents on Wednesday, down \$3.53, or 85 per cent, from a peak of over \$90 in August 2000, after the top three US rating agencies downgraded Enron to junk status.

"There are winners and losers in deregulated markets and people who champion them are not necessarily those who will be around in the end," Keenan said. Despised by some market players, many of its trading partners nevertheless were willing to go out on a limb because of Enron's good reputa-



IE Graphics/B.K. SHARMA

way trading partners shifted business away from the cash-poor and credit-threatened Enron.

WHAT NOW?: If Enron's fallout has a significant effect on the regulated companies it did business with, regulators and policymakers could slow down the pace of power deregulation.

But if the damage is confined to the wholesale trading market, there will not be as much impact, analysts said. So far, 23 states and the District of Columbia have moved to deregulate their retail power markets, although nearly one third of them have delayed the onset of competition partly due to California's failed free market experiment.

Analysts also said if Enron is no longer a major player in the large customer market, where it has been very effective, deregulation is not likely to proceed as quickly. "This puts us more into the middle of whether deregulation is good or not," said Sharon Reishus, an associate director of North American power at Cambridge Energy Research Associates, an independent research firm based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. *Reuters*

Enron's trading business — its crown jewel — has also suffered from lower volumes as

managers pulled the fire alarm and reduced their exposure. "Up to about two months ago, an Enron corporate guarantee was seen by many as money in the bank. Then the whole house of cards came down," Keenan said. People began looking at Enron more closely, especially since October when a series of nega-

tion, smart traders, and high-fly-ing share price. Enron's core business of trading electricity and natural gas relies highly on credit worthiness, and much of its trading was backed by a corporate guarantee, a kind of standby IOU.

Once that credit guarantee began to be doubted, credit

disclosures about the company's finances forced the company to lower its reported earnings by \$600 million over the last four years as a result of questionable off-balance sheet transactions.

Enron's trading business — its crown jewel — has also suffered from lower volumes as

Enron is history, says history

WSJ 9/5/99 HOLMAN W. JENKINS JR. 30/11

BACK in the mid-1980s, a pipeline executive called Ken Lay was fishing around for a name for his company, produced by a merger of Houston Natural Gas and Omaha-based InterNorth. He consulted with consultants, politicked with politicians, and came up with a moniker. The company would be called "Enteron."

Three weeks later, fed up with the wisecracks from a press that had looked up the dictionary definition of "enteron" (n. the intestine), he changed the company's name again. Henceforth it would be known as Enron.

A columnist less devoted to high standards of decorum might be tempted to extend the metaphor of the company's misbegotten name. In recent weeks, after all, we've seen Enron's stock collapse over indigestible accounting and the emergence of dealings between the company and its senior officers that exude an odour of genuine malfeasance. The evidence is far from clear, but for the sake of Lay's reputation one hopes these missteps will prove one more case of a company fooling itself rather than setting out deliberately to defraud the markets.

Enron grew to be much more than a pipeline hauler of natural gas, becoming the pre-eminent trader and marketer of all kinds of energy contracts and a vocal proponent of deregulation. Now, all but overnight, it's kaput.

We cannot help be put in mind of another commodity wunderkind in the 1970s, Phibro (short for Philipp Brothers). Hard to believe, but Phibro was once a name that made grown men quiver on Wall Street. Fattened by trading profits from the great commodity inflation of the 1970s, which some mistook for a permanent new age of scarcity, it scooped up the Street's oldest partnership, Salomon Brothers, tucking it into its back pocket and renaming the combined firm Phibro-Salomon. Here was a powerhouse of unlimited potential, investors told themselves.

Flash ahead to California's electricity meltdown earlier this year. Enron saw its revenues quadruple partly as a result of the inflated prices being quoted in the California market. Many foresaw a new scarcity megatrend, but there was no true energy shortage. Posted prices on the California power exchange may have skyrocketed, but the effective

price was zero dollars and zero cents, because the utilities had no cash to pay and politicians were thumbing their noses at piles of IOUs.

When prices are zero, suppliers take a hike—that's what economics teaches. But once the state government started pumping its own cash into the market, the phony posted prices plummeted and supplies became plentiful again. Now California is swimming in power and nobody talks about an "energy crisis" anymore.

You can date the loss of investor confidence in Enron almost exactly to the moment when the California fiasco began to repair itself. *Fortune* magazine put the inaugural nail in Enron's coffin in March, noting that the company's growing dependence on trading had turned it into an oil-patch version of Goldman Sachs. Goldman's stock sells at a price-earnings multiple of 17, reflecting investors' well-founded distrust of trading earnings to be reproduced reliably year after year. So why, it asked, was Enron awarded a multiple of 60-plus?

Enron did yeoman service as a champion of deregulation. Boss Ken Lay, a believer in technology and the power of markets, was a true visionary, to the point of annoying people who didn't care for his air of being a man on the right side of history. The moldering pipeline he took over would certainly have been an also-ran if he had not thrown Enron headlong into trading and marketing.

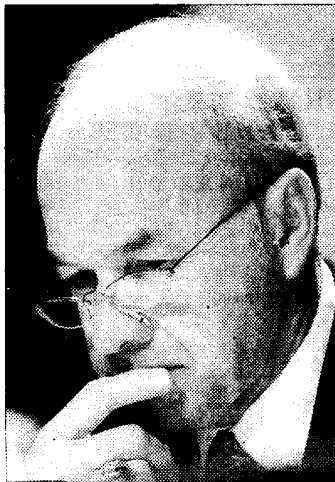
But deregulation doesn't confer permanent advantage on anybody. A deregulated environment favours constant innovation and a continual upsetting of plans and strategies.

Add the fact that, despite the California bubble, there is no reason to believe energy prices won't continue their long-term relative decline as technology advances ore quickly than the depletion of conventional re-

sources. Add also the likelihood that information technology will continue to lower the barriers to entry to Enron's trading business, which means more competition and shrinking margins. Enron begins to look a lot like Phibro.

Wishful accounting has proved the last refuge of companies whose dearly held "visions" were not panning out. Enron prided itself on being realistic and adaptive, but it failed to see that its own beliefs about the world needed overhauling.

(*The Wall Street Journal*)



You can date the loss of investor confidence in Enron to the moment when the California energy fiasco began to repair itself. *Fortune* put the inaugural nail in Enron's coffin in March, noting its dependence on trading

INDIAN EXPRESS

30 NOV 2001

Terrorist hand ruled out in crash of AA Flight 587

New York, November 13

INVESTIGATORS ARE leaning toward mechanical failure, possibly in one of the engines, as the cause of the fatal crash of an American Airlines jet that killed all 260 people on board and a few on the ground, officials said.

American Airlines Flight 587, an airbus A300 bound for Santo Domingo, yesterday slammed into a residential area, destroying homes, and igniting new fear in a city traumatised by September's terror attacks. Six people on the ground were reported missing.

Speculation immediately centred on a possible new terror attack. City authorities ordered a huge security alert as military jets flew air cover and city bridges, tunnels and airports were closed.

But the national transportation safety board said early signs pointed to a catastrophic

mechanical failure on board the plane because the engine appeared to fall off and because the crash happened so early in flight.

Investigators have already recovered the plane's cockpit voice recorder and planned to have it analysed by experts in Washington.

NTSB chairman Marion Blakey said that the only voices heard were those of the pilot and co-pilot. "The NTSB is the lead agency because all the information we have currently is that this is an accident," she said. By last night, searchers had recovered 265 "relatively intact bodies," CNN quoted police as saying.

Thick black smoke belched into the air after the plane hit, spoiling the brilliant clear morning. Shards of burning wreckage littered tree-lined residential streets, while fire consumed houses bathed in aviation fuel. The tail section of the

plane was later pulled from nearby Jamaica Bay.

Four of the 12 houses that had been hit were destroyed, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said. One was damaged when an engine of the doomed plane, almost intact, sliced into it. Other wreckage just missed a gas station. Witness reports suggested an engine had tumbled from the plane before it crashed.

Fearing a new wave of terror, Giuliani immediately put the city on high alert, two months after hijackers turned airliners into flying bombs and destroyed the city's landmark World Trade Center.

The White House said there was "no unusual communication" between the twin-engine jet and air traffic controllers before the crash. New York Governor George Pataki said the pilot had dumped fuel before the disaster, but later said reports to that effect were inconclusive.

AFP

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

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255 ON BOARD DEAD; MANY BUILDINGS AFIRE; EXPLOSION ON PLANE?

U.S. jet crashes in New York

NEW YORK, NOV. 12. An American Airlines jetliner on its way to the Dominican Republic with 255 people aboard crashed moments after takeoff from the John F. Kennedy Airport in a residential neighborhood on Monday, setting homes on fire.

Bush administration officials said the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) believed an explosion occurred aboard the plane. The White House spokesman, Mr. Ari Fleischer, said there were no unusual communications from the cockpit of the plane. A senior administration official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said, "It's looking like it's not a terrorist attack, but we can't reach a firm conclusion yet." The city — already on the edge after the September 11 terrorist attack — was put on high alert. Fighter jets were seen flying over the scene in the Rockaway section of the borough of Queens, in the southeastern part of New York City.

Flight 587, an Airbus A300, went down shortly after 9 a.m. (1400 GMT) in the waterfront neighborhood 24 km from Manhattan, setting buildings on fire in a densely-populated area that is home to many firefighters who were among the dead and the rescuers at the World Trade Center. A plume of thick, black smoke could be seen miles away and flames billowed high above the treetops.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said there were 246 passengers and nine crew members aboard the plane. The National Transportation Safety Board was designated the lead agency in the investigation, signalling that officials were leaning toward the theory that a catastrophic mechanical problem was at fault, the law enforcement source in Washington said.

In 1996, TWA Flight 800 left the Kennedy Airport for Paris and crashed off Long Island, killing all 230 people aboard. The NTSB concluded the jet was destroyed by a fuel tank explosion, probably caused by a wiring spark.

Airports closed

All metropolitan area airports — Kennedy, LaGuardia and Newark, New Jersey — were closed after the crash, and international

flights were diverted to other cities. All bridges and tunnels into the city were closed except to emergency vehicles, and the Empire State Building was evacuated.

In Washington, the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, met advisers, seeking details of the crash. An official said intelligence agencies, the FBI and the FAA were reviewing all recent intelligence for any signs that terrorism was involved. At the Pentagon, two defence officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said no additional fighters had been dispatched to the New York area and that the entire matter was being handled by the FAA as a domestic disaster with no apparent military implications.

U.N. meetings continue

At the U.N. headquarters, where Ministers from the 189 member States were gathered for the General Assembly, all vehicle and pedestrian entry was barred. Speeches continued as the U.N. security chief made an announcement about the crash and the security restrictions over the building's public address system.

"I have been asked by the Security Council to express our sincere and heartfelt sympathies to the people and the Government of the United States and the families of those who have lost their lives," Jamaica's U.N. Ambassador, Ms. Patricia Durrant, the current council president, told reporters before an open council meeting.

The Mayor, Mr. Rudolph Giuliani, cancelled his morning events and headed to the scene, where he said, "People should remain calm. We're just being tested one more time and we're going pass this test, too." He added that there were no survivors from among the passengers of the plane.

Flights diverted

International flights headed to New York were diverted to Boston, Cincinnati and Washington's Dulles airport, Delta Air Lines said.

Witnesses reported an engine and other debris falling off the plane as it came down. Ms. Milena Owens, who lives two blocks from the crash site, said she was



This television frame grab shows a fireman looking over the engine from the Airbus A-300 that crashed on Monday in Queens in New York city. — AFP

putting up Thanksgiving decorations on her window when she saw the plane. "I heard the explosion and I looked out the window and saw the flames and the smoke," she said, "and I just thought, 'Oh no, not again'."

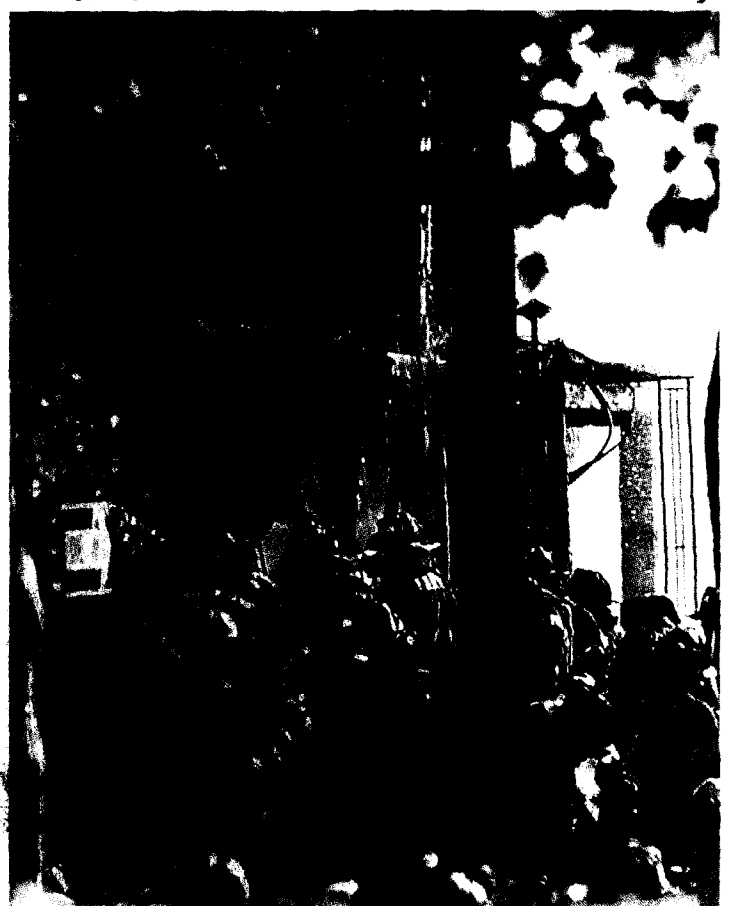
The middle-class neighborhood — comprised largely of Irish, Italians and Jews — was already struggling to recover from the World Trade Center disaster. Neighbours said as many as 90 residents were killed in the Trade Center, most of them firefighters and employees at the Cantor Fitzgerald financial firm. "We were still trying to bury a number of our heroes," said local resident, Mr. Gary Toms. "This is going to compound the devastation for a lot of people to deal with."

The plane was lying on top of about 12 homes, said Mr. Ed Williams, community liaison for Rep. Gregory Meeks. "It's pandemonium here," he said. "We don't know if there are any survivors but it looks really bad."

Emergency medical centers were set up a high school and an elementary school, both of which were closed for the Veterans Day holiday.

A hospital near the crash site said it treated about 15 people for smoke inhalation and several others for abrasions. All of the injured had been on the ground, not the plane, and none appeared to be critically injured.

In Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, relatives of passengers aboard the flight crowded the airport, sobbing and grasping each other after hearing of the crash. "Not the child, please not the child," said Ms. Germania Brito, who was waiting for her sister, Ms. Mariana Flores, her sister's husband, Mr. John, and their 2-



Firefighters work at a burned out residence at the scene of the crash. — AP

year-old son, Isaias. "May God help us all."

Stocks slump

Stock markets slumped and the dollar tumbled after news of the plane crash sparked fears of a new wave of terrorist attacks. Frankfurt share prices plunged over four per cent, while the London and Paris share markets both tumbled over three per cent.

In New York, the Dow Jones Industrial Average slid 1.72 per cent and the Nasdaq technology index shed 2.01 per cent.

Oil prices dropped further into loss, with the Brent North Sea crude for December delivery down 86 cents at \$ 20.52 a barrel. The dollar fell to 120.10 yen from 120.74 in morning trade. AP, AFP

More reports on Page 12

THE HINDU

13 NOV 2001

Initial reports say there was an explosion on t plane and one engine fell off Airbus with 255 cashes in NY

MAUREEN NANDINI MITRA
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW YORK, Nov. 12. — An American Airlines jet crashed into a residential neighbourhood 10 minutes after taking off from John F Kennedy International Airport here today, killing all 255 people on board.

The plane was on its way to Santo Domingo, the capital of Dominican Republic from Boston via New York. Airlines officials said the plane was carrying 246 passengers and nine crew members.

Flight 587, an Airbus A300, which took off at 8.40 a.m. (EST) went down at 9.17 a.m. in the residential area of Rockaway in the Queens borough about five miles from the airport. Initial reports say there was an explosion on board the plane before it went down but White House spokesman Mr Ari Fleischer said here it was too early to speculate about the cause of the crash.

The source of the explosion is unknown. One of the engines fell off before the plane crashed. American Airlines also refused to speculate on the cause of the crash.

There were two crash sites — one where the plane landed and another where one of its engines landed. Reports said at least four buildings were affected in the crash. They said one engine of the plane had broken off and crashed into a posh residential area setting many houses on fire. New York mayor Mr Rudolph Giuliani said there was no survivors.

The casualties on the ground were not immediately known. Names of passengers haven't been released as yet. The Indian consulate in New York has no information if there were any Indians aboard the flight. All three New York area airports — JFK, LaGuardia and Newark — were shut down, but JFK has been reopened to arriving flights. All city tunnels and bridges have been closed down.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said in its first

advisory there was no immediate indication of a terrorist attack. A subsequent communique said the reasons for the crash were being probed.

Mr Fleischer said communications with the aircraft were normal before the crash. He also said he expected the shutdown of New York area airports to be "of a limited duration". The White House spokesman also said the authorities had not received any credible threats of terrorist attacks coinciding with today's crash.

US President George W Bush has postponed a meeting with Russian and American reporters to meet with advisers to discuss the crash.

"The President is on top of it. They're alert; they're watching everything else all over the country," Mr Giuliani said. He advised people to "remain absolutely calm".

The Pentagon said that surveillance flights in the area of the crash spotted nothing unusual.

The United Nations was sealed off after the crash. No cars or pedestrians were allowed to enter the UN building, where the annual General Assembly session is in progress.

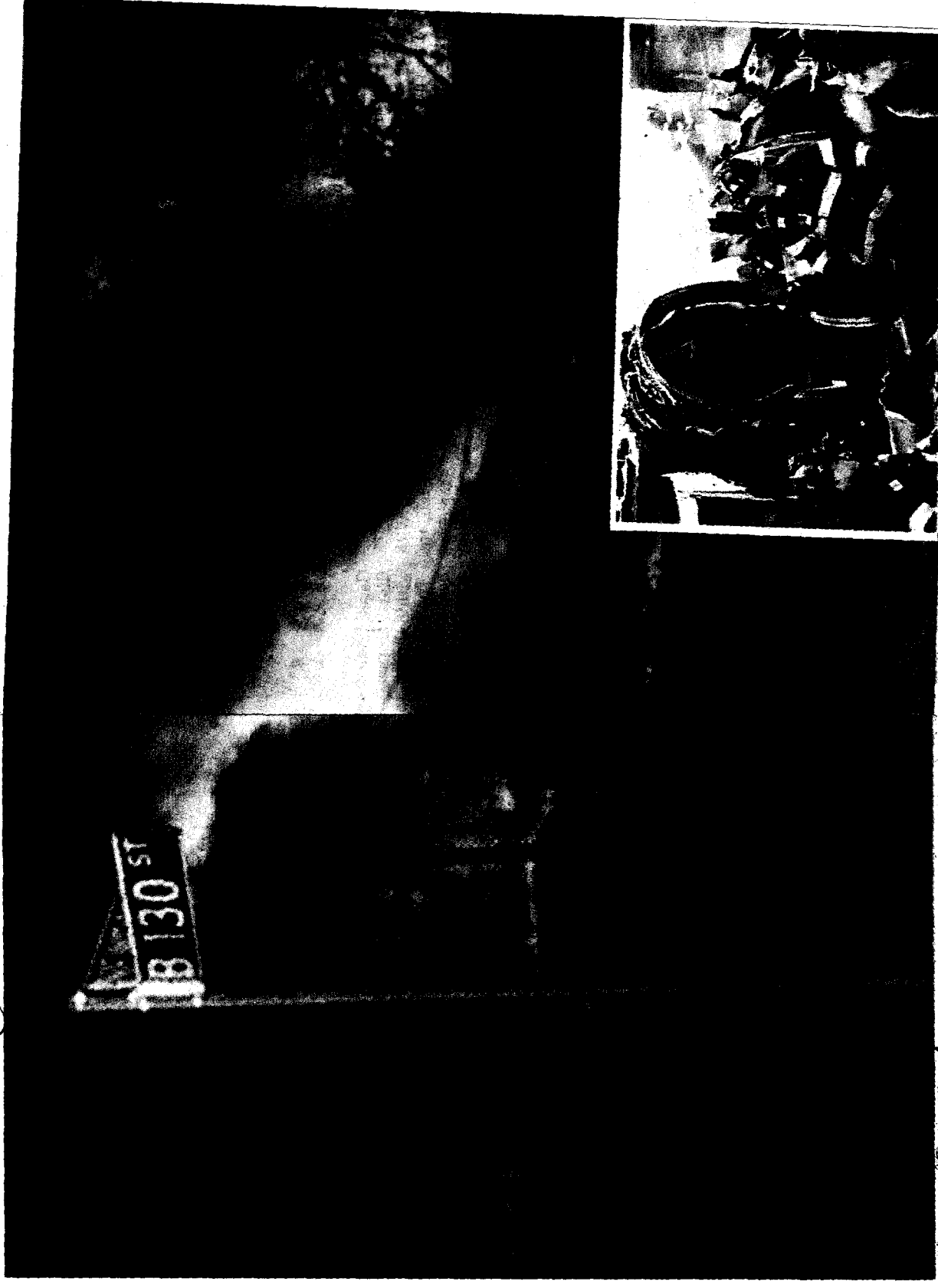
FBI: The FBI, on high alert after the 11 September attacks, said there was no indication that today's crash was a terror attack or that there was an explosion on board, Reuters adds from Washington.

"Right now we don't believe it is (a terrorist incident) because we don't have any information indicating that it is," FBI spokeswoman Ms Tracy Ballinger said.

Another FBI spokeswoman said it was far too early to say what had caused the crash.

Radio contact: Air traffic controllers lost radio contact with the American Airlines plane that crashed today some four minutes after it took off from New York's John F Kennedy airport, a FAA spokesman said, AFP adds.

"Radio contact was lost at 9:17 a.m. (7.47 p.m. IST)," FAA spokesman Mr Paul Takemoto



A television image shows houses set ablaze by the jet (inset) firefighters search through the debris for survivors. — AP/PTI

American Airlines jetliner that crashed in New York today, a senior investigator said.

National Transportation Safety board chairman Ms Marion Blakey told reporters the data recorder was recovered from the wreckage and would be flown to Washington later in the day for analysis.

BA flights: British Airways Plc said today it may be forced to divert four aircraft due to land in New York in the next few hours after the passenger jet crash,

remain unchanged after the passenger jet crash, adds from Mumbai.

Reyon London.

Leathrow airport is slated likely to be sections to trans-

visit to the USA and then go on to Texas for further talks on Wednesday at Mr Bush's Texas ranch.

The Russian President Vladimir Putin, who departed for a five-day evening for A-1 flight returns: Air-India's flight (AI-111) to New York today returned to London, 90 minutes after take-off as the JFK airport in New York was closed following the crash, PTI adds from Mumbai.

There were 219 passengers on board the flight which is expected to resume its journey once the airport reopens, an Air-India spokesman said here tonight. Tomorrow's flight (AI-101) to New York will be operated as per schedule, he added.

Kolkata airport security: Security at NSC Bose Airport has been further tightened, SNS adds from Kolkata.

(With inputs from agencies)

19/1

No pause during Ramadan: Rumsfeld

WS 31/10

WASHINGTON, OCT. 30. The Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, has ruled out a halt in American airstrikes on Afghanistan during the Muslim holiday of Ramadan. A report from Jabal Saraj in Afghanistan said that in continuing U.S. attacks, a huge explosion hit the Bagram front lines, about 40 Km north of Kabul, today sending up a mushroom cloud that billowed at least 1000 feet into the air.

"The Taliban and the Al-Qaeda are unlikely to take a holiday. Given the fact that they have killed thousands of Americans and people from 50 or 60 other countries, and given the fact that they have sworn to continue such attacks, we have an obligation to defend the American people, and we intend to work diligently to 'do that,'" Mr. Rumsfeld told a Pentagon news conference on Monday.

Responding to suggestions that the military effort may have bogged down, Mr. Rumsfeld repeated warnings that the anti-terrorism effort would not be a short one. "This will not happen overnight," he said. "It is a marathon, not a sprint. It will be years, not weeks or months."

He said the bombings had killed some leaders of the Taliban military and the Al-Qaeda network, but not the top ones.

Three weeks of bombing had taken a toll on the supporters of Osama bin Laden, who the U.S.

Government believes was behind the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Asked about reports that the Taliban had arrested Americans in Afghanistan, Mr. Rumsfeld said, "There have been no American military captured. Whether someone else may have been ... I

FBI fears another attack

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 30. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has warned Americans for the second time this month that terrorists may attack the country, possibly this week.

Officials say the threat comes from the terrorists of the Al-Qaeda network, who are planning attacks for retaliation for the military strikes against Afghanistan. "There certainly is intelligence that causes you to be concerned, and possibly that the Al-Qaeda may be behind," a senior official said.

don't think so." Rumsfeld also addressed charges that the U.S. bombing was killing civilians. "We know victory will not come without a cost," he said. "Let us be clear, no nation in human history has done more to avoid civilian casualties" than the United States." — AP

THE HINDU

31 OCT 2001

IN THE SHADOW OF A HEINOUS CRIME

PAKISTAN'S CIVIL SOCIETY faces a qualitatively new challenge in the aftermath of the gruesome murder of 16 worshippers and a security guard at a church at Bahawalpur in the country's premier province of Punjab on Sunday. It is obvious that the present regional context may only magnify the international concerns about the possible escalation of social-political trouble in Pakistan, whatever might have been the actual motives of the gunmen themselves or their masters, if any, who plotted the carnage itself. However, the reality check is one that Pakistan itself should devise. For several weeks now, civil society in Pakistan has found itself being sucked into the vortex of an enormously complex identity crisis, which certainly is not of Islamabad's own making. Now, official Islamabad is continually rocked by the rumblings of some high-voltage popular discontent over the emergence of Pakistan as the only conspicuous 'frontline state' in America's ongoing military operations in Afghanistan. The well-orchestrated popular anger against the U.S. and official Islamabad may not enjoy a huge constituency within Pakistan itself. The social order in Pakistan is under tremendous strain at present following the decisively swift manner in which the President and Chief Executive, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, recently pushed the 'Islamic republic' into an open alliance with the U.S.-led West in genuinely volatile circumstances. An obscurantist Taliban regime in Afghanistan and its notorious ally, Osama bin Laden, a radicalised 'Islamic' ideologue, are currently the prime "enemies" of the U.S. So, the pressure on Pakistan's social cauldron has risen immeasurably, especially on account of the country's highly proactive segment of Islamic fundamentalists on the fringes. It is this overall social milieu that

might define Pakistan's new challenge of reassuring its tiny Christian minority about its security.

3/10 (AKO #9-11)
Gen. Musharraf, who represents the moderate face of Pakistan, has lost no time in not only condemning the "heinous act against the tenets of Islam" but also recognising the mayhem as an act of terror. One aspect that will doubtless exercise the minds of international pundits, especially in the West, is whether the Bahawalpur tragedy could be the handiwork of some amateurish proponents of a "clash of civilisations" in the particular context of the current U.S.' operations against Osama bin Laden.

Regardless of any particular line of investigation and criminal justice, Pakistan's socio-political dilemmas can only be solved on the basis of the country's own basic ethos. A variety of historical factors account for the current virulence of extremism within pockets of Pakistan's overwhelmingly Islamic majority. The Musharraf administration's task of safeguarding the stability of Pakistan is clearly cut out, and his responses indicate that he is seized of the magnitude of the problem. The nation's blasphemy laws and, more importantly, their judicial and political interpretations have sometimes led to a backlash from the fundamentalists. Pakistan's religious minorities, very small in size, have often been caught in such social storms, and the country's human rights activists have also not fought shy of turning the spotlight on such issues with a view to improving social harmony. For Gen. Musharraf, a careful crackdown on the religious hawks is an indicated course, while India should let the Pakistani leaders and people know that it wishes them well. A stable Pakistan is in the enlightened interest of India's pluralist society.

Massive cleanup continues; one Congressional building to reopen

Anthrax hits White House

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON/RABAT, OCTOBER 24

THE tentacles of a suspected germ war campaign snaked toward the White House on Tuesday. Anthrax spores were found at a remote military facility where all mail for the White House is screened, but officials are confident none found its way to the executive mansion, the White House said.

"This afternoon a positive anthrax culture was found at the remote mail site that serves the White House," White House spokesman Ari Fleischer told reporters in a hastily called briefing. "Test results showed it to be positive for a small concentration of anthrax."

"The facility has been closed for further testing and decontamination. Tests will be performed on all mail received at this site to determine its source. All employees at this site are being swabbed and tested," he said.

Fleischer said the remote site, which he did not identify, had been closed and all employees there were being tested for exposure to the potentially deadly bacteria, as were workers in the White House mail-

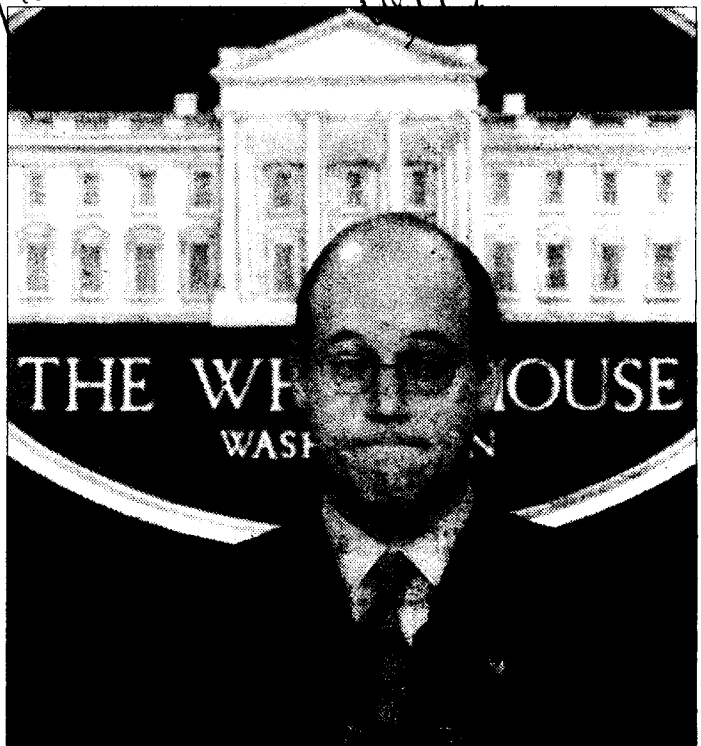
room. CNN has identified the site as Bolling Air Force Base.

Confirmation that two Washington postal workers died from inhaled anthrax and word of another suspected case of the deadliest form of the disease in New Jersey has prompted authorities to scramble to protect against further attacks. Yet, federal and local officials defended their failure to carry out quick tests to check mail facility workers but promised a more effective response in the future.

"Everyone is learning on a day-to-day basis," said Dr Jeffrey Koplan, director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, the agency responsible for containing disease outbreaks.

The State Department went on to update a worldwide caution for Americans abroad, adding a warning that they cannot exclude the risk of anthrax attacks.

Meanwhile, lawmakers decided to reopen one Congressional building, saying tests found it free of anthrax. But they said four other buildings where the potentially deadly bacteria was found last week may remain closed into next month pending a massive cleanup.



Environmental experts needed more time, however, to give a clean bill of health to the other buildings which normally house lawmakers and staff, they said. Earlier on Tuesday, displaced lawmakers and their staffs began taking up temporary residence in nearby federal office buildings, most of them at the seven-story General Accounting

Office. Congressional hearings scheduled in closed buildings were moved or postponed.

"We are all being guided by science," said Lt Dan Nichols of the Capitol police. "The bottom line on this is science takes time." Nichols said authorities have yet to determine the source of anthrax in the Ford building.

INDIAN EXPRESS

25 OCT 2001

After 25 years, CIA begins 'wanted-dead-only' hunt

MARTIN FLETCHER, MICHAEL EVANS & ANTHONY LOYD

WASHINGTON/ JABAL OS SIRAJ, Oct. 22. — The US government has given the CIA clearance to assassinate Osama bin Laden, overturning a 25-year-ban on political murders by the agency.

The President, Mr George W Bush's signature on the order permitting the killing comes as Britain and the USA step up efforts to capture the Saudi and destroy his al-Qaida network before the onset of Afghanistan's fierce winter greatly complicates their task.

The British Special Forces are poised to join the Americans in launching commando raids in Afghanistan following a Pentagon request for SAS help. In anticipation of the US request, around 400 specialist troops are in the region or poised to leave for it, according to defence sources.

A small number of SAS soldiers is believed to have carried out reconnaissance missions in Afghanistan, but the Pentagon wants the "war-winning" unit to play a much larger role.

"The strategy is clear and is working. Air power has been used to damage (Taliban) defences and that is making the ground more conducive to other operations," Mr Tony Blair's official spokesman said.

It was disclosed yesterday that President Bush had signed a special order for the CIA. Leading senators said the order effectively repealed America's 25-year-old ban on government-sponsored assassinations.

"The gloves are off," one senior administration official told The Washington Post. "The President has given the agency the green light to do whatever is necessary. Lethal operations that were unthinkable pre- 11 September are now under way."



An Afghan refugee looks back at his country as he and his family cross the border on the way to a refugee camp in Pakistan on Monday. — AP/ PTI

Taliban positions near the frontline north of Kabul came under their heaviest air bombardment to date yesterday as US jets pounded sites in the Kohesafie district, some 25 miles north of Kabul. The attacks are believed to be the start of a more aggressive campaign to help the rebel Northern Alliance advance on the Afghan capital.

Washington has hesitated before clearing the way for such an advance until a broadly-acceptable post-Taliban administration can be established, but US Secretary of State Gen Colin Powell, predicted the Northern Alliance will soon "move on Kabul more aggressively".

He didn't rule out the continuance of US military operations during Ramadan beginning in mid-November. "It'll be in our interest and the interest of the coalition to see this matter resolved before winter strikes and makes our operations that much more difficult," he said.

Newsweek, meanwhile, reported that Saturday morning's commando strike, the first acknowledged move by US ground forces, came after US Intelligence officials said bin Laden was hiding somewhere in a 20 square mile area of Afghanistan. A source said the special forces raided a compound near Kan-

dahar belonging to Mullah Muhammad Omar, the Taliban leader, hoping to find more Intelligence because the area was so riddled with caves and tunnels that it was "impossible to seal".

The Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, General Robert Myers, refused to comment on "sensitive Intelligence matters," when asked about the Newsweek report. On whether US forces'll shoot Laden on sight, he said they would take him alive if possible but "bullets will fly" if attacked.

Gen Myers also hinted that the US military had begun planning for possible attacks against targets in Iraq. He said: "This is a global war on terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. So Afghanistan is only one small piece ... We're thinking very broadly. I'll say since World War II we haven't thought this broadly about a campaign."

The Administration has no firm evidence linking Iraq to the 11 September attacks, but top Pentagon officials have forcefully argued that the Iraqi President, General Saddam Hussein, is a proponent of terror and should be removed. Such a move isn't, however, in line with official White House policy.

The Connecticut Senator and former vice-presidential candidate, Mr Joseph Lieberman, said Mr Bush's new order to the CIA had effectively repealed executive order 12333 banning political assassinations that President Ford signed in 1976 after the agency had run amok, plotting the murders of about eight foreign leaders including Cuba's Fidel Castro and the Congo's Patrice Lumumba.

Mr Lieberman said he was "entirely comfortable" with the President's move. "I think the original executive order was in response to the abuse of the power that a government should have, and its military should have, to target execution at individuals who, if we don't kill them, will then kill many more of us."

THE STATESMAN

2 3 OCT 2001

Anthrax attacks linked: FBI

Kevin Johnson and Laura Parker
Washington, October 18

INVESTIGATORS HAVE linked anthrax episodes in Florida, New York and Washington and are pursuing "substantive leads" in the investigation into who sent the deadly bacteria to three cities. The FBI declined to elaborate on what the leads are.

Preliminary tests show the anthrax mailed to NBC headquarters in Manhattan and a tabloid office in Boca Raton, Florida, were of the same strain.

Investigators have tied the NBC letter to a letter sent to Senate majority leader Tom Daschle. Similarities in the envelope type, postmark and handwriting suggest that the two letters may have been mailed by the same person. Both letters contained the same message: "Death to America. Death to Israel. Allah is great."

The letters also warned the recipients they'd been exposed to anthrax. "You're going to die," the text read, according to a senior law enforcement official.

The spores in the letter sent to Daschle may have spewed in a wide circle because the envelope was taped on all four sides, which prompted the aide who opened it to cut it open with scissors.

Authorities said little about how the anthrax spores sent to New York and Florida were produced. But the spores mailed to Daschle's office were "professionally done," said a bioterrorist expert who works for the Government. Attorney General John Ashcroft said the spores found in the South Dakota Democrat's office indicate "that it's virulent, strong, very serious".

The connections point to a coordinated attack. But investigators are still believe that the bioterrorism could either be the work

of a foreign terrorist network or a domestic loner with a grudge.

Ashcroft suggested in an interview with PBS on Wednesday night that the attack could have been the work of both. Asked if he has reached any conclusions about the motive, Ashcroft said, "I think there is an intention to kill."

The developments came on a chaotic day in Washington when 31 Senate employees tested positive preliminarily for anthrax exposure, the House of Representatives shut down and the six House and Senate office buildings were ordered closed so they could be swept for traces of anthrax.

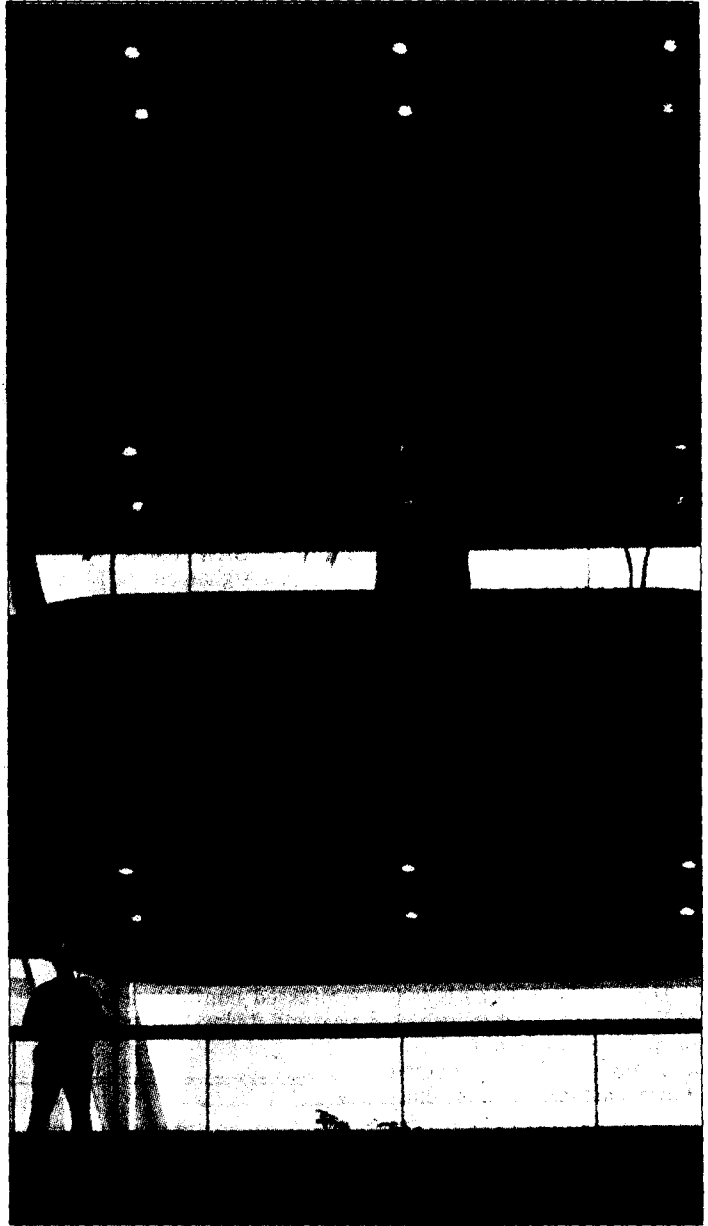
In the midtown Manhattan office of New York Governor George Pataki, anthrax was detected in an initial test. The office was closed.

Bush administration officials continued to skirt the issue of whether they believe the anthrax episodes were the work of the Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network or a nation that supports terrorism. Bioweapons experts are speculating that the highly concentrated anthrax mailed to Daschle points in that direction. Ashcroft said his investigators lack conclusive evidence of international terrorism but are suspicious of the outfit and the timing of the attacks.

Involvement of a foreign nation would prompt a whole set of foreign policy complications that could damage President Bush's stated mission to root out terrorism "wherever it grows".

Investigators were glad that the analysis of the anthrax spores sent to Florida and New York show they are the same strain. But that finding could prove of limited value, especially if it turns out to be a strain that thousands of research labs around the world already have.

USA Today



AP PHOTO
Police officers guard all floors of the southeast quadrant of the Hart Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill on Wednesday as police search for further evidence of anthrax contamination.

'Weapons-grade' anthrax in Senator's mail

MARK HENDERSON
THE TIMES, LONDON

19/10 517

LONDON, Oct. 18. — The anthrax powder sent to Senator Tom Daschle has been described as "weapons-grade" because it has been finely milled so that it can lodge in the lungs and cause the most deadly form of the disease.

In the first confirmed anthrax case outside USA, a letter sent to an unidentified Kenyan businessman in Nairobi had tested positive for anthrax, the Kenyan health minister, Mr Sam Ogeri, said today, adds Reuters from Nairobi.

In order to cause pulmonary anthrax, which is fatal in up to 90 per cent of cases, bacterial spores must be carried on particles of between one and five thousandths of a millimetre. Larger grains don't penetrate deep into the lungs, while smaller ones won't lodge there.

While it's comparatively easy to produce coarse anthrax powder that will cause the less dangerous, skin-based

form of the disease, fine grinding requires considerable expertise and sophisticated equipment.

That makes it more likely that the powder found in the Congress was produced by a well-organised terrorist network, rather than by a lone Unabomber-style fanatic.

Mr Michael Powers, researcher at the Chemical and Biological Arms Control

Institute in Washington DC, said: "Usually, to produce that quality of anthrax requires a high level of technological sophistication, which to my mind indicates some sort of state sponsorship."

Prof Harry Smith, Emeritus Professor of Microbiology at the University of Birmingham and chairman of the Royal Society's panel on biological weapons, said: "I haven't heard the term military-grade before, but one possibility is that it refers to very fine particles."

The sample, which was tested at the US Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases at Maryland, is reported to have been very pure.

'WHO WILL WIN WAR?'

BALTIMORE, Oct. 18. — Mrs Laura Bush yesterday took charge of a Baltimore classroom assuring children that their country will win the war on terrorism, while local policemen were put on high alert after receiving reports of a possible anthrax attack in the city.

"Who's going to win the war?" 9-year-old John Wyatt asked her. "We are, I hope," Mrs Bush replied. She read Jane Kurtz's *Faraway Home* to a class of 21 second graders at the Maree Garnett Farring Elementary School. She said the story highlighted US diversity and tolerance. — Reuters

THE STATESMAN

19 OCT 2001

29 Senate staffers test anthrax positive

Washington, October 17

WASHINGTON, Oct. 17 (AP) — TWENTY-NINE SENATE Majority Leader Tom Daschle's staff members tested positive for exposure to anthrax, congressional leaders said on Wednesday as they moved to shut down much of the US Capitol temporarily as an extraordinary precautionary measure.

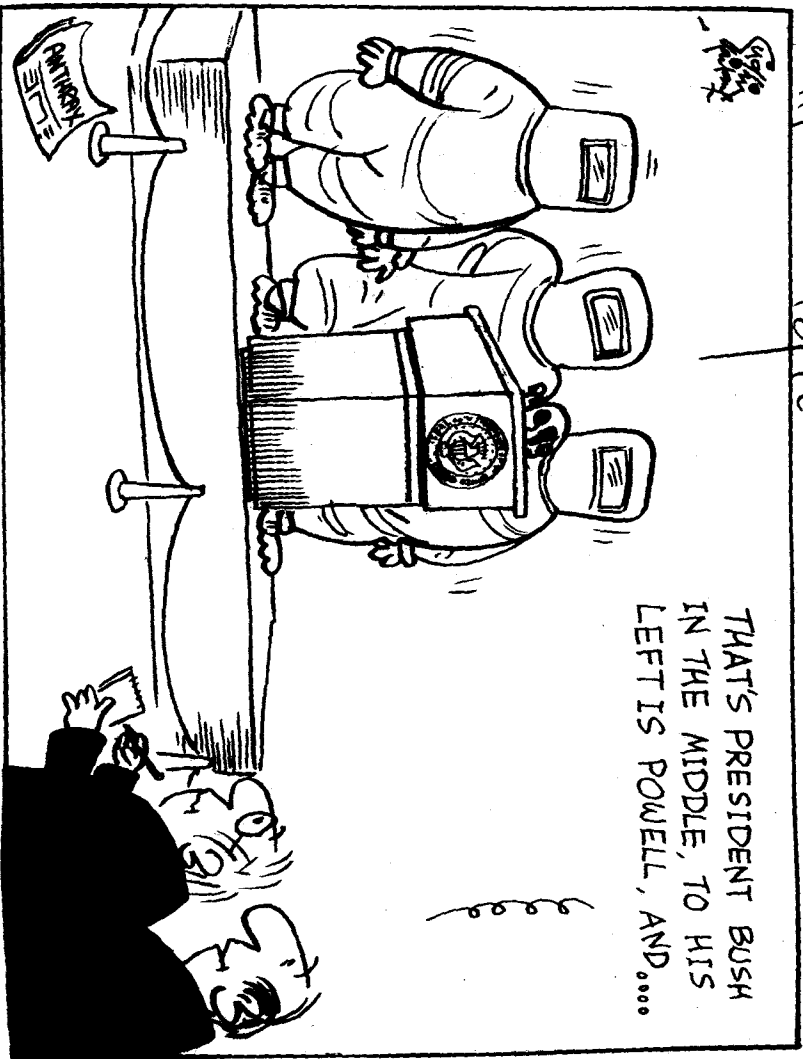
US House of Representatives Speaker Dennis Hastert said his chamber would be closed at the end of business on Wednesday for screening for anthrax and Senate leaders considered closing their chamber as well, aides said.

Hastert said 29 of Daschle's staffers tested positive for exposure to anthrax and that anthrax spores had been found in Senate mail machines and a portion of the Senate complex's ventilation system.

Hastert said on there was evidence anthrax had gotten into the Senate ventilation system. "They did find a spore that was going through the ventilation system in the Senate."

"It's going through the tunnels, and it was in the system of those buildings, and also found in the mailroom of the Senate, where packages moved through," Hastert said.

The House speaker also said one of his offices had been quarantined for testing after a suspicious package had been found. "Right now we're checking for anthrax," Hastert said. "We are going to ... leave after the day's business is done, and we will be screening the build-



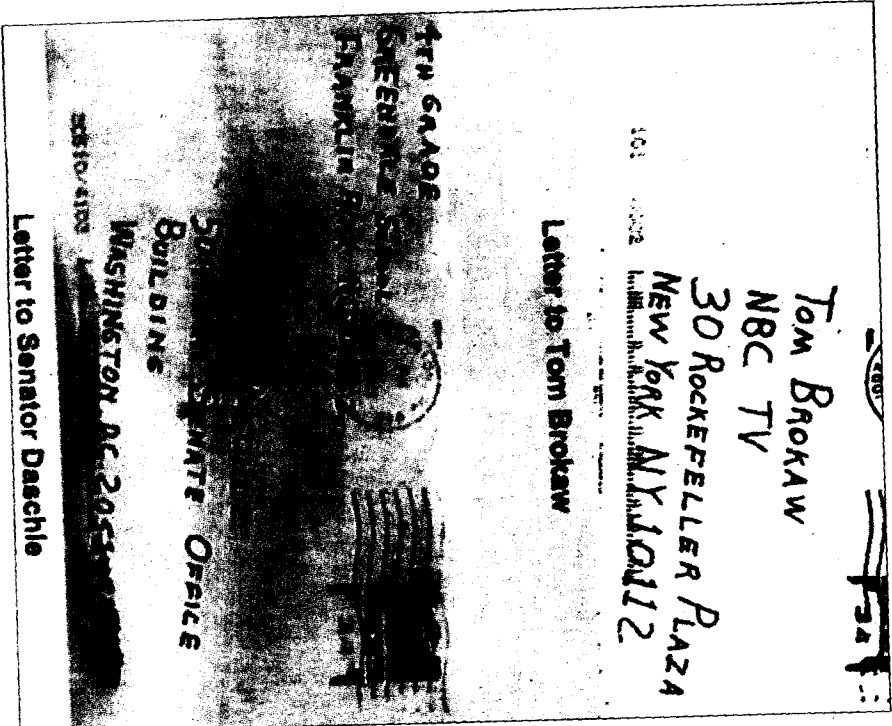
(Right) The FBI has released the letters addressed to NBC staffer Tom Brokaw and Senator Tom Daschle.

ings through Monday." Assistant Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid of Nevada announced on a hushed Senate floor: "We do know that in Senator Daschle's office, more than 20 people are infected with anthrax."

Reid also told colleagues he and others were confident that available antibiotics already being taken by staffers would be effective.

The announcement was made two days after the nationwide anthrax scare reached the US Capitol when a letter containing the potentially deadly bacteria was opened in Daschle's office.

Reid condemned whoever was responsible for sending the letter, saying, "This is a horrendously evil act. I really hope that these people will be brought to justice." Aides said Daschle was planning to hold a news conference at midday.



The powdery substance found in the letter sent to Daschle's office was confirmed to be anthrax on Tuesday when a portion of the Senator's Hart Office building that contains Daschle's office was closed to check the ventilation system. Authorities said the type of anthrax found in the letter was potent and was a type that spreads easily by air.

Hastert said Congress intended to resume its business as soon as possible. "It's not our intent to close up shop. We're going to be here to do our work," he said.

Taliban to blame for civilian deaths: America

US-Saudi bitterness

may hobble strikes

Julian Borger
Washington, October 16

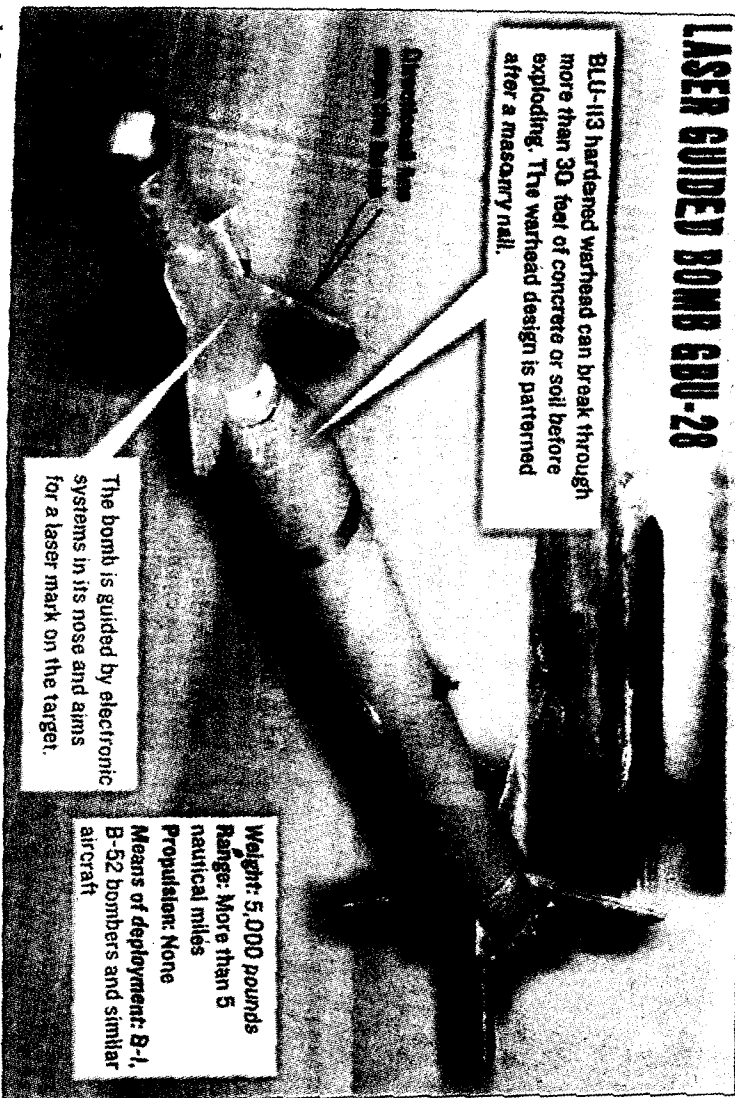
US DEFENCE Secretary Donald Rumsfeld today blamed the Taliban for the civilian deaths in Afghanistan and said they had been killed by the ruling militia's ammunition dumps.

Rumsfeld was referring to reports from the eastern village of Karam, where the Taliban took reporters to show the remains of mud huts, and a number of graves. The Taliban claimed 200 civilians had been killed including children.

Calling the Taliban leaders "accomplished liars", Rumsfeld said the figures were "ridiculous". "We know that Taliban leaders are accomplished liars, that they go on television and say things that are absolutely untrue." He said US bombs had hit the opening to two nearby tunnels believed to be possible ammunition dumps, causing powerful secondary explosions. People living near the site may have been involved in storing and guarding the ammunition store. "There's no question that people who were close to these ammunition dumps may very well have been casualties. They were not cooking cookies inside those tunnels," Rumsfeld said. Reporters taken to Karam said they saw bomb craters among the houses and one unex-

LASER GUIDED BOMB GBU-28

BLU-113 hardened warhead can break through more than 30 feet of concrete or soil before exploding. The warhead design is patterned after a masonry nail.



The bomb is guided by electronic systems in its nose and aims for a laser mark on the target.

Weight: 5,000 pounds
Range: More than 5 nautical miles
Propulsion: None
Means of deployment: B-1, B-52 bombers and similar aircraft

ploded warhead and talked to villagers who said their relatives had been killed. They could not verify the total number of dead.

The Pentagon, however, denied that there were bomb craters in the village, and insisted that intelligence reports had suggested before the air strike that Karam had not been heavily

populated. The targets of the attack were tunneled-out caves, said General Richard Myers, chairman of the joint chiefs staff, adding that at least two caves were penetrated by US weapons that sparked explosions that burned for four hours. Rumsfeld, however, admitted that one house near the Kabul

airport had been hit accidentally due to a programming error. "On occasion, there will be people hurt that one wished had not been. I don't think there's any way in the world to avoid that and defend the US from the kinds of terrorist attacks which we've experienced," Rumsfeld said.

The Guardian/AFP

Smart bombs only as good as programmers

Lugh Stroppe
Washington, October 16

PRECISION BOMBS and missiles with complex targeting technology are only as successful as the humans who create and programme them.

A guided bomb dropped on Afghanistan missed its target by 1.6 kilometres on Saturday. The Pentagon said a target coordinate was entered incorrectly into its satellite navigation system.

Ground reports indicated that four people were killed and eight injured, according to a Pentagon statement.

US officials said they had no way to confirm the number of casualties. "The munitions that are being used tend to be very precise. They are not 100 per cent," Defence Secretary Donald H Rumsfeld said.

The US has gone to great pains to hold together its anti-terror coalition with promises that efforts are being made to minimise civilian casualties.

One week into the new war, those casualties are mounting, ranging from eight to 200, depending on which side is counting.

AP

Smart bombs only as good as programmers

Lugh Stroppe
Washington, October 16

RAPIDLY SOURING relations between the US and Saudi Arabia turned into a crisis yesterday when the kingdom criticised the bombing of Afghanistan.

Analysts said this was the gravest challenge now facing the future of the US-led strikes on Afghanistan.

David Wurmser, director of Middle East studies at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, said yesterday: "The US's foreign policy structure in the region has been anchored in the strategic relationship with Saudi Arabia. If everything we're hearing is true, then we're facing a meltdown."

"The whole war as currently conceived would have to be reconsidered, because Pakistan won't hold if Saudi support starts collapsing."

American feeling was expressed in a powerful editorial in Sunday's *New York Times*, which described Saudi behaviour as "malignant" and said the "cynical" bargain between the countries, which for decades had offered US protection for the regime in return for an uninterrupted flow of oil, was now "untenable".

Since September 11, Riyadh

Smart bombs only as good as programmers

Lugh Stroppe
Washington, October 16

has refused to allow attacks on Afghanistan from its bases, Prince Abdullah, the country's crown prince and day-to-day ruler, has avoided meeting President Bush. Muslim clerics within the once-monolithic country have issued fatwas against the bland assurances of amity, there has been growing US frustration about the extent of Saudi cooperation with this investigation too.

The other side has been equally frustrated. "It's unbelievable how the feeling here has changed from sympathy to anger in such a short time," according to a Riyadh-based westerner quoted by Reuters yesterday. Another resident compared the mood here to that of Iran in the late 70s, before the overthrow of the Shah.

The Saudi Interior Minister, Prince Nalf, had said yesterday: "We wished that the US would have succeeded in forcing the terrorists to leave Afghanistan without resorting to bombardment because so many innocent people will be victims."

In remarks reported by the official Saudi press agency, he continued: "We are not at all happy with the situation. This in no way means we are not willing to confront terrorism."

The Guardian

3 Britons from U.S. tested for anthrax

LONDON, OCT. 13. Three persons in Britain were undergoing precautionary tests for anthrax because they had worked in the Florida and New York buildings where cases of the disease were reported, the Public Health Service Laboratory said on Saturday.

"To date, three co-workers are known to be in the U.K., two from the Florida building and one from the New York City Rockefeller Center building and are, on a precautionary basis, being tested here," a laboratory statement said.

The lab stressed that there was no reason to believe that the three had contracted the disease.

"It is also very important to remember that anthrax is not spread from person to person, and so there is no risk of onward transmission."

The three were not identified and a lab spokesman did not say when the test results would be known.

At the same time, the Department of Health confirmed that the Government was reviewing Britain's ability to cope with chemical or biological attacks.

Since September 11, the Department said it had reviewed all plans for protecting the public and dealing with public health emergencies, including how to deal with a deliberate anthrax release.

Although there was "no specific, credible risk" in Britain, "We have an obligation to be vigilant and well prepared."

The Department has been discussing its anthrax contingency plans with emergency-planning managers, and was reviewing stocks and supplies, including treatments for chemical and biological incidents.

A spokeswoman said stock levels of antidotes, vaccines and other treatments for a range of potential threats, including anthrax, had been carried out. She declined to discuss what quantities were available but said there was enough.

Last week a photo editor for *The Sun* supermarket tabloid in Boca Raton, Florida, died of the inhaled form of anthrax.

The American Media building, where he worked, was sealed off after anthrax was found on his keyboard.

Two other employees, found to have been exposed to anthrax, have not developed the disease.

On Friday, an employee of the NBC television at Rockefeller Plaza, was found to have another form of the disease.

Although the cases followed the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, no connection between the attacks and the disease has been proven.

In Kazakhstan too

Meanwhile, a U.S. military team helping to decommission a former Soviet biological weapons factory found anthrax spores this week, Defence and State Department officials said in Washington today.

The team found the anthrax in a pipe at the former Soviet facility at Stepnogorsk, which is now in Kazakhstan, said Pentagon spokesman, Maj. Tim Blair.

All of the team members, as well as another eight persons helping the team outside the building, had been vaccinated for

anthrax and were wearing protective suits, Maj. Blair said.

None of the 12 workers was believed to have been exposed to the bacteria, but they are taking antibiotics as a precaution.

"This is what they were looking for, so they were prepared to deal with it," he said.

Only to cause panic?

Our Science Correspondent writes:

If the recent anthrax cases in the United States are linked to the Osama bin Laden network as the U.S. Vice-President, Mr. Dick Cheney, suspects, the aim would appear to be to strike fear rather than cause mass casualties.

The draft for an updated edition of the World Health Organisation's report on the 'Health Aspects of Biological and Chemical Weapons' says these could be used for psychological warfare.

"Distinct from their ability to cause physical injury and illness, biological and chemicals agents are amenable to the waging of psychological warfare because of the horror and dread that they can inspire," it said.

"Even if the agents are not actually used, the fear of them can cause disruption, even panic. Exacerbation of such effects can be expected from the exaggerated accounts of biological and chemical weapons that are to be found in political circles and in the news media," it added.

In order to cause mass casualties, the biological agents have to be in the form of an aerosol, a cloud of fine particles.

These particles must be small enough to penetrate deep into the lungs and get deposited there. But if they are too small, most of them will be simply breathed out again.

A WHO expert committee estimated that there would be 2.5 lakh casualties if 50 kg of anthrax was released from an aircraft over an urban population of five million.

The U.S. Congressional Office of Technology Assessment believed that between 1.3 lakh to three million deaths could follow if 100 kg of anthrax spores was released upwind of Washington, D.C., a lethality matching or exceeding that of a hydrogen bomb.

The U.S. authorities grounded all crop-dusting aircraft when they discovered that one of the terrorists in the September 11 suicide attacks had made enquiries about hiring one.

The fear was that such an aircraft could be used to disperse biological or chemical warfare agents.

But in the recent anthrax cases in the U.S., the anthrax spores seem to have reached the victims as a powder in an envelope.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, one of the leading institutions in the world for highly infectious diseases, said the risk of exposure was greatest to the few people who handled the letter after it was opened or those in the immediate area when it was opened. No wonder, then, that so few people even contracted the disease, only one of whom has died. Nevertheless, if it was bio-terrorism, it has certainly succeeded in spreading fear and anxiety in many countries.

THE HINDU

WSO
H9-16

Anthrax: FBI opens probe

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

M10

WASHINGTON, OCT. 11. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has launched a criminal investigation into the source of anthrax contamination at a supermarket tabloid after learning a third employee was exposed. A nasal swab taken from a 35-year-old woman, whose name was not released, tested positive for the presence of anthrax. She was being treated with antibiotics at a hospital and her condition was not immediately known.

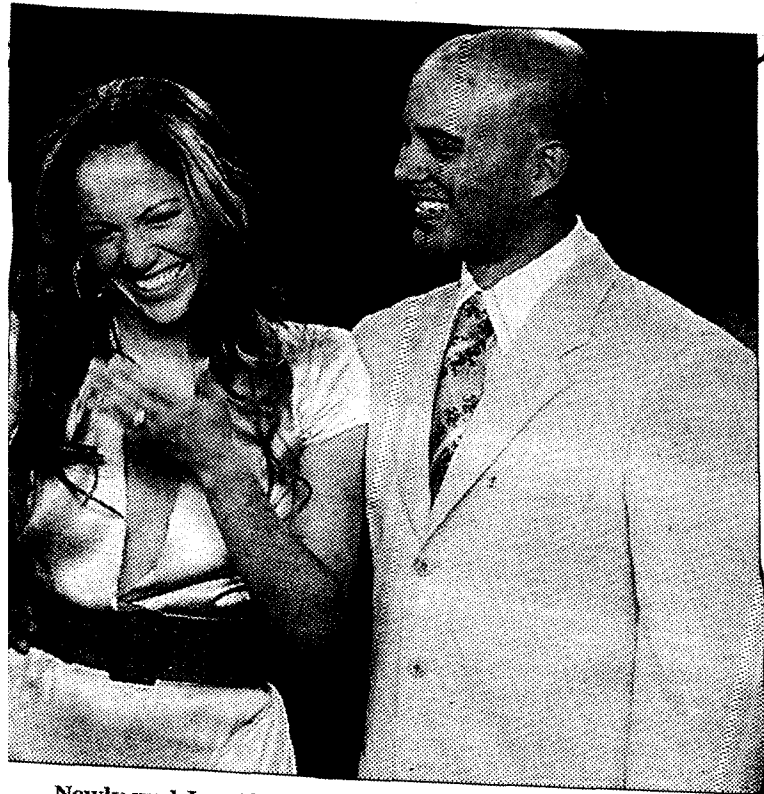
The FBI has said that the anthrax spores found in the Florida building housing American Media Inc., which publishes six tabloids, is part of a strain produced in Iowa nearly 50 years ago. The Centre for Disease Control in Atlanta is one of the agencies involved in the investigation of the Anthrax cases in Florida. The agency has been swamped with calls

from people wanting to know more anthrax. An FBI task force sealed off part of the State Department building on Wednesday after an employee said some powder was seen in the mailroom. It turned out to be a false alarm.

One portion of the U.S.-Canadian border was shut down for about seven hours after someone phoned in a bomb threat against a freight company. A Delta Airlines flight from Atlanta to Los Angeles was diverted after a passenger handed a flight attendant a "threatening note". Two fighter jets escorted the aircraft after the pilot reported the problem. A man was arrested and charged with causing disturbance.

As the country looks back on what happened exactly a month ago, there are fears that more such terrorist acts could take place in the U.S. America is definitely in a state of heightened alert.

THE HINDU



Newly-wed Jennifer Lopez with husband Chris Judd. (AFP)

Boycott nerves in Bangla

FROM ASHIS CHAKRABARTI

Dhaka, Oct. 2: Bangladesh could enter yet another spell of post-election political turmoil that was common in the country before the 1991 parliamentary polls.

That the country could once again lapse into street battles between rival political parties, strikes and other kinds of shutdowns of the pre-1991 years was suggested by the Awami League's refusal to accept the election result.

In February 1996, the League boycotted the elections in which the BNP won 289 seats. The parliament was dissolved soon after and in the fresh elections of June, the Awami League came to power.

Awami League president and former prime minister Sheikh Hasina indicated at a news conference here this afternoon that her party might stay away from the parliament. "What's the necessity

of attending this parliament?" she asked, because the people would not accept this verdict.

The League presidium will meet tomorrow to draw up plans for protests and non-cooperation.

It is likely that the elected party candidates may not take oath as members of the new parliament.

But winner Khaleda Zia urged the League and other parties to cooperate with the new government in building a "prosperous and peaceful Bangladesh".

Khaleda congratulated the people for the success of her party and its partners. "Violence and corruption must now end and the rule of law must return," she told a press conference later in the evening.

Hasina accused the caretaker government led by former Supreme Court chief justice Lutfur Rahman and the BNP leadership of "snatching away" the peo-

ple's right to vote, "for which we had struggled so hard and so long".

The poll, according to her, was "apparently free but surely not fair". She alleged that the caretaker government, the administration and the BNP leadership had drawn up the "blueprint for conspiracy". The mass transfers of civil and police officials and "massive irregularities in the election procedure during polling and counting" had set the stage for a "civilian coup".

That the post-election scene could result in the losing side rejecting the verdict had been anticipated not only by local analysts but also by the European Union's election observation mission in Bangladesh. On the eve of the polls, the mission head, Joachim Miranda, had appealed to all parties to accept the verdict.

The mission's preliminary report on the poll said the "elec-

toral process had guaranteed sufficient conditions of freedom and fairness".

But it regretted that certain practices during the campaign "have affected, in some cases, the freedom of choice of the voters". The commission members were, however, cautious in giving the poll a clean sheet.

Both Miranda and the mission's deputy head, Paolo Salvia, refused to spell out clearly if they thought the polls were free and fair.

In the capital, Dhaka, which had been a League bastion in 1996, the party drew a blank, conceding all the eight seats to the BNP. Even Saber Hossain Choudhury, one of the most popular League leaders, lost, though by a narrow margin.

The city erupted in victory celebrations of the BNP candidates, while League supporters sulked in silence.

Not an act of revenge: U.S.

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 26. The United States is trying to put across the view that what its response in Afghanistan is not an act of revenge or retaliation, but one of self defence. The Bush administration is also trying to further turn the heat on the Taliban by telling the people of Afghanistan that it is time to get rid of the extremist outfit in Kabul.

The toughening rhetoric and the seemingly tightening of measures against the Taliban comes amid the military build-up in and around the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean. Diplomatically, Washington is reaching out far and wide and roping in nations in this grand coalition against terrorism.

"The truth is, this is not about revenge; it's not about retaliation. This is about self defence. America knows that the only way it can defend against terrorism is by taking the fight to the terrorists," the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, said.

Operationally what is also being

suggested is that this war against terrorism may not entail massive bombings against Afghanistan or scores of cruise missiles pinning down targets. Senior administration officials are trying to impress that a number of things will be happening simultaneously — military, diplomatic and on the financial front, to mention a few.

What has created some unease, especially in the media, is the President, Mr. George W. Bush's comment that the best way to bring the terrorists responsible for the September 11 attack would be to "ask for the cooperation of citizens within Afghanistan who may be tired of having the Taliban in place".

The White House later clarified that the President did not mean that the objective of an impending strike against the Taliban was intended to bring that regime down. That stems from an unease even within the administration that the U.S. may be drawn into a "nation-building" process in Afghanistan should the regime there fold.

"...the President's message is that we will take actions designed to protect the people of the U.S. and protect people (around the world) from terrorism and that we will take action, including military, against those who harbour terrorists. It is not designed to replace one regime with another," the White House Spokesman, Mr. Ari Fleischer, said.

The White House is also trying to make the point that the issue at hand is that the U.S. going after terrorists; and not telling the people of Afghanistan that they would be better off without the Taliban which in the view of the President is an "incredibly repressive" regime.

"... the fundamental mission that the President is focussed on is going after, through a variety of means, those people who sponsor or harbour terrorists. Stability of the region is also an important issue which is going to ... be a part of all the planning that goes into what is done," the White House maintains.

THE HINDU

27 SEP 2001

We'll Come Out Of It Strong, Says The Prez

Bush freezes terrorists' assets in chilling declaration

65-A
Scott Lindlaw

WASHINGTON 24 SEPTEMBER

CALLING IT a "strike on the financial foundation" of terrorists, President Bush signed an executive order on Monday, freezing the assets of 27 individuals and organisations. He demanded foreign banks follow suit.

Standing in the White House Rose Garden, President Bush said his order applied to "terrorist organisations, individuals, terrorist leaders, a corporation that serves as a front for terrorism and several non-profit organisations."

Nearly two weeks after the worst terrorism attack on American soil, which shook all American to the core as they saw the planes hit the twin towers, Mr Bush conceded he was "concerned about the shock this had on the economy."

But he said "the fundamentals for (economic) growth are strong," and added defiantly: "We'll come out of this and we'll come out of it strong."

There was at least some sign of optimism on Wall Street, where the stock market opened sharply higher after a week of exceptionally steep declines.

President Bush spoke as halfway around the world, the leader of Afghanistan's ruling militia, Mullah Mohammed Omar, said the United States should withdraw from the Persian Gulf and "put an end to the biased attitude on the issue of Palestine."

In a faxed statement, he said the death of Osama bin Laden — the suspected mastermind behind the September 11 attacks — would do little to remove any threat to the United States. Actually a few years back, the past President of the United States of A had ordered the killing of the most wanted terrorist Osama bin Laden.

Flanked by secretary of state



STEP BY STEP: President Bush walks out of the Oval office on Monday with secretary of state Colin Powell (centre) and secretary of the treasury Paul O' Neill after the signing of a bill that will freeze terrorists assets. — AP

Colin Powell and treasury secretary Paul O'Neill, President Bush said: "Money is the lifeblood of terrorist operations. Today, we're asking the world to stop payment." He called the list "the financial equivalent of law enforcement's most-wanted list."

The President's executive order

marked the first public step of the financial elements of his declared war on terrorism. He was working on the diplomatic front during the day, meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien at the White House. Outside Washington, Americans resumed their routines. — AP

The Economist 25

40-4
25/9

New York prays for the victims

NEW YORK, SEPT. 24. Representatives of New York's broad spectrum of faiths took the field of Yankee stadium yesterday to offer prayers for the victims of terrorism. The New York Mayor, Mr. Rudolph Giuliani pledged that "our skyline will rise again."

"To those who say that our city will never be the same, I say you are right," Mr. Giuliani told those at the service. "It will be better." Representatives from a range of religions were evident in the crowd. A group of about 20 men in orange, red, white, blue and pink turbans carried a sign declaring that Sikhs condemn terrorism.

There were prayers from clergy of many religions, interspersed with renditions of "God bless America" and other inspirational songs. Opera star Placido Domingo, accompanied by piano and harp, received a standing ovation for a stirring version of "Ave Maria." "When we were children we all wanted to be a fireman or a policeman," rabbi Joseph Potasnik, a fire chaplain, told the crowd. "Today, as adults we can again answer we want to be like them. We know who we are. They showed us who we can be." Cardinal Edward Egan, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of New York, asked God to care for the World Trade Center dead and heal the injured.

Mr. Giuliani was careful to call it a prayer service rather than a memorial service, insisting that hope was not lost for some of the 6,333 people missing in the wreckage of the WTC. No survivors have been pulled from the ruins since the day after the September 11 disaster. Security was heavy at the ballpark in New York's Bronx borough and the



Dignitaries join hands while they sing "We Shall Overcome" at New York's Yankee Stadium on Sunday during the "A Prayer for America" service. Bottom row from left: Ms. Oprah Winfrey, the New York Mayor, Mr. Rudolph Giuliani, the New York Governor, Mr. George Pataki, and the acting New Jersey Governor, Mr. Donald T. DiFrancesco. Back row, fourth from left: Mr. Charles Schumer and Ms. Hillary Rodham Clinton, Senators, and the former President, Mr. Bill Clinton. — AP

crowd of thousands filled about half the stadium.

City officials had printed some 55,000 tickets, which were given out at limited locations. When it became apparent that so many seats were unfilled, the general public was invited in an hour before the service. Political leaders, including the former President, Mr. Bill Clinton and Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton and Charles Schumer, were on hand. The crowd chanted "Rudy" when Gi-

uliani walked to the podium set up near second base.

The American Red Cross handed out tissue packets. Many people held up signs with photographs of the missing. Mourners arriving at the Yankee stadium had to run a gauntlet of police officers and State troopers checking tickets. No bags, backpacks or coolers were allowed. Police officers were stationed in the stadium's light stanchions.

Small American flags and roses

were distributed. The stadium was bedecked with flowers and red-white-and-blue bunting. The flags that had stood at half-staff since September 11 were returned to the tops of their poles.

Meanwhile, the grim work of searching through the Trade Center wreckage continued without interruption in Lower Manhattan, and the business of trying to return to a semblance of normal went on throughout the city. — AP

THE HINDU

25 SEP 2001

MISSILE DEFENCE / REPUBLICANS MIFFED AT CUT IN BUDGET

Democrats, White House set for showdown

WSD

HD-12
9/9

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 8. In a vote on strict party lines, the Senate Armed Services Committee voted to cut some \$ 1.3 billions from the Missile Defence Programme, setting the stage for a fight with the White House on the issue.

While the Senate panel cleared the Pentagon's \$ 343 billions for fiscal 2002 starting October 1, the vote on the cut for missile defence programme was 13 to 12 with all the Republicans opposing the move.

The Senate Committee not only cut funds for the President's key programme but also placed restrictions on missile defence activities which was also opposed by the Republicans.

Under the scheme of things, a special vote by Congress would be required if any of the money that is going to be spent on the tests is violative of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. This would hold good even if the U.S. is no longer a party to this accord. The President, Mr. George W. Bush, has repeatedly said the U.S. will pull out of the ABM Treaty at a convenient

time. Republicans, smarting and miffed at the cut in the missile defence programme funding, are up in arms that Democrats would seek to further tie up the President's plan by insisting that Congress vote each time a test is deemed violative of the 1972 arrangement.

"This language will not become the law of the land as surely as I'm standing here", the ranking Republican on the Committee, Mr. John Warner, told reporters after the panel meeting.

He released a letter from the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, warning law makers that he would recommend a veto of the Defence Appropriations Bill if it contained this particular language.

"If such language were to become law, it would send a signal to the Russians and other countries that may prefer that the U.S. remain vulnerable to ballistic missiles that they can wait us out", Mr. Rumsfeld had argued.

What is critical is that the Democrats in the Armed Services Committee are seeking to pin down the future tests of the mis-

sile defence plan and the ABM Treaty even after the U.S. had pulled out of the accord. But the Chairman of the Committee, Senator Carl Levin, argues that this is all about the implications of Washington getting out of the treaty unilaterally.

"We have a responsibility for appropriating funds when the issues are that important — to have the information which has not been provided to us as to whether or not, in fact, these activities for which funding is being sought conflict with that treaty", Mr. Levin, the Democrat from Michigan remarked.

Russia and China are vehemently opposed to the missile defence plan as it is seen clearly violative of the ABM pact. The Bush administration has entered into a serious dialogue with Moscow on the subject and is confident of winning the Russians over.

In any case, there is the view that an unofficial deadline of November has been set for the U.S. to pull out of the ABM Treaty, a view brushed aside by this Republican administration.

Discovery beats bad weather

Cape Canaveral (Florida)

NASA BEAT the clock, the odds and the weather forecasters on Friday, launching the space shuttle *Discovery* on a hot, hazy afternoon just before thunderclouds enveloped the seaside launch complex. *Discovery* was on its way to the International Space Station with a new long-duration crew and about five tonnes of supplies, scientific hardware and a new portable stateroom that means one of three crew members will no longer have to sleep in a hall.

Discovery blasted off at 5:10 pm EDT, five minutes earlier than originally scheduled as NASA raced to beat the approaching storms. Forecasters had given the shuttle just a 30 per cent chance of launching due to stormy weather typical of summer afternoons at the Kennedy Space Center.

On Thursday, NASA scrubbed

the launch with just nine minutes on the countdown clock when heavy clouds with lightning blanketed the launch pad. The shuttle commander, Scott Horowitz, was told of the approaching storm clouds about two hours before launch while he lay strapped to his seat on the shuttle's flight deck.

"We see some of those out the window. We can't tell the distance but they don't look as bad as yesterday," Horowitz said. Astronaut Frank Culbertson, who will become the space station's third commander, on Thursday had held up a sign to a television camera before boarding that said "Hi Family! I love you!" On Friday he modified it to read "I still love you!"

This is the eighth shuttle mission in 12 months for NASA, all of them dedicated to the \$95 billion space station project. Unlike the others, this one is remarkable for its lack of "firsts."

The space station crew being ferried is the station's third. The Italian-made cargo module holding food, provisions and scientific hardware, has flown once before. It signals not only the maturation of the program but a shift in focus. The Expedition Three crew — American Culbertson and Russians Mikhail Turin and Vladimir Dezhurov — will spend more time on scientific experiments than earlier crews have. The only construction scheduled for their four- to six-month tour is the addition of a Russian air lock that will be automatically docked to the station using a pilotless navigation system the Russians have employed for years.

By contrast, the Expedition One team, which reached the station last October, arrived at a station with no functioning life-support and very little room to work. The Expedition Two crew saw the station grow until it was

as roomy as a three-room apartment.

The Expedition Three crew of Russian Yury Usachev and Americans James Voss and Susan Helms, is still aboard the space station and will return aboard *Discovery*. They will undertake 18 scientific studies in addition to 10 being continued from the expedition two crew. The new coat-closet sized stateroom fixes a problem that station has had since the first crew arrived. The Russian-built crew quarters were modeled after those used by two-person Mir crews.

Long-duration astronauts have confirmed the assertions of psychologists that personal space is important on long tours. The \$95 billion space station programme is a partnership of space agencies in the United States, Russia, Japan, Canada and Europe.

Reuters

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

12 AUG 1991

519 Carter-Ford panel submits poll reform proposals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA 2/8

WASHINGTON, Aug 1. - US President, Mr George W Bush, has endorsed electoral reforms, proposed by a commission comprising former presidents Mr Gerald Ford and Mr Jimmy Carter. The new reforms make the election day a federal holiday, restore voting rights to the felons and curb media rush to project winners.

Following the election fiasco in 2000, the reforms intend to prevent controversies that still shroud the poll results. Some critics are of the view that Mr Bush is President because he was "selected" by the Conservative-dominated US Supreme Court and not by voters.

The two ex-Presidents have suggested, among other things, that voters challenged by poll workers should be allowed to use provisional ballots.

The commission has asked the federal government to provide financial assistance to the state governments to help upgrade their poll processes.

The commission suggests that each state sets up a statewide registration system, in which a



President Bush and former President, Mr Jimmy Carter, at a ceremony at the White House, on Tuesday. - AP/PTI

citizen could get on the list anywhere and have the information relayed to his or her precinct in order to avoid denial of voting rights due to non-registration.

The commission opposes doing away with punch card ballots, the voting system that caused confusion in Florida during the last election. It argues that eliminating the

punch card system could drive jurisdictions to buy other voting systems like optical scan machines that are opposed by advocates for the blind and disabled.

695 FBI weapons go missing

Kevin Johnson
Washington

10/10/12
THE FBI and Immigration and Naturalisation Service cannot account for 695 weapons issued to agents in the past decade, including handguns, rifles and submachine guns, according to separate internal audits of the agencies.

In addition to the 449 weapons lost or missing at the FBI, bureau officials said on Tuesday that 184 laptop computers could not be accounted for out of its inventory of 13,000.

At least one of the missing computers carried classified information related to two closed cases.

Authorities also suspect that three computers could have contained classified materials, a senior FBI official said on Tuesday.

FBI officials said the internal audit was continuing, but it was not believed that the missing

computers had compromised ongoing investigations.

Based on the findings from both agencies, Attorney General John Ashcroft on Tuesday ordered the Justice Department's inspector general to begin an audit of all physical inventories within the Justice Department to include service weapons, vehicles and even office furnishings.

"In order for law enforcement organisations to be effective, they must have the public's confidence in their ability to perform not only the most complex duties but also the most basic responsibilities," Ashcroft said on Tuesday.

For the FBI, the missing weapons and laptops are only the latest in an embarrassing string of incidents that have plagued the agency in the past decade.

Earlier this year, the bureau's failure to turn over thousands of documents to attorneys repre-

sending convicted Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh led to a month-long delay of McVeigh's execution, the federal Government's first execution in 38 years.

The latest disclosure by the FBI also comes the night before a Senate hearing on bureau operations was expected to deal with mounting problems at the agency.

In the next few weeks, the Senate also is expected to consider the nomination of Robert Mueller, whom President Bush named to succeed Louis Freeh as FBI director.

Freeh retired last month.

Among the 449 missing weapons at the FBI, at least 184 were classified as stolen. Authorities believe one of those weapons, a handgun stolen from an agent's car, might be linked to a murder.

About 265 have been reported lost. FBI officials said they were opening criminal investigations

into about 70 cases in which retired or fired agents failed to surrender their weapons when leaving the bureau.

The FBI began its audit about four weeks ago when Ashcroft directed bureau officials to launch a top-to-bottom review of its operations after the foul-ups disclosed in the McVeigh case.

"The FBI has about 50,000 weapons in its inventory. But the bureau had never done a national audit until it launched that effort about a month ago.

The INS started its own review earlier this year. In March, federal authorities determined that 539 INS weapons were missing. Investigators still cannot locate 246 of them.

"The Justice Department must ensure the highest standards for the accounting of law enforcement equipment issued to employees and agents," Ashcroft said.

USA Today

WHITE HOUSE GETS NEW 'WAR ROOM'

Five months on, Bush follows Clinton footsteps

Mimi Hall

Washington, July 5

THE PRESIDENT'S top adviser circulates a memo outlining how to use the White House to help vulnerable members of Congress up for re-election. The vice president hosts big-money donors at his official residence. A Cabinet secretary gives party fundraisers a private briefing in his office. And a dozen or so senior White House aides meet every week to plot strategy for the next congressional elections and the presidential race in 2004.

Sound like the Clinton White House? It's not.

On the campaign trail, George W. Bush was cheered when he criticised former President Bill Clinton for politicising the White House. A month after

Bush became President, Vice-President Cheney stood before conservative supporters and proclaimed, "The days of the 'war room' and the permanent campaign are over."

But five months into the new administration, outside analysts and observers from both parties say the opposite is true. They say the West Wing of the White House is home to what may be the most sophisticated, high-stakes political operation ever seen out of 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

"This is as political an administration as we've ever had," says Brookings Institution scholar Thomas Mann. "In some respects, I would argue that this is the quintessential permanent campaign presidency."

Of course, political pros say Bush needs to focus on politics. He won the

presidency after one of the closest elections in history, his party just lost control of the Senate and it holds the House by only a slim majority.

And no one is suggesting that he is taking illegal contributions, renting the Lincoln bedroom for campaign cash or becoming a poll-driven fundraiser in chief.

Nevertheless, observers marvel at the intensity and scope of the Bush White House political machine.

"They're stealthy, and they're hard-hitting," says political scientist James Thurber of American University in Washington. "And they do have a war room, even if they don't admit it."

Led by top Bush strategist Karl Rove, the political operators have their fingers in some of the smallest races for national office and their minds on the biggest

contests to come: the battle for control of Congress in 2002 and the race for the White House in 2004.

In addition to fulfilling his obligations on domestic and foreign policy, "the president is always the leader of his political party," explains Jim Gilmore, chairman of the Republican National Committee (RNC).

Aides are working to reverse the President's decline in opinion polls after some decisions that proved unpopular, most notably on environmental issues. At the same time, they're focused on the future. "We're obviously going to always seek ways to elect folks who want to enact Bush's agenda," aide Dan Bartlett says.

To that end, Bush and his team are spending considerable time:

- Helping vulnerable GOP incumbents up for re-election
- Targeting voting blocs such as Hispanics and Catholics to help Bush win re-election in 2004
- Raising money and keeping donors happy
- Polling

American University's Thurber says the administration's wide-ranging political efforts are among the most sophisticated he's seen—and he says they are part of a necessary strategy for any White House.

"They're realists," he says of Bush and his aides. "They indeed criticised the Clinton administration for doing it, and now they're doing it in their own way. But that's normal. It's naive to think that they would do anything else."

USA TODAY

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Bush calls for biggest hike in defence spending

MICHAEL EVANS & BEN MACINTYRE
THE TIMES, LONDON

TALIBAN WARNED

WASHINGTON, June 29. - The Bush administration took the first step yesterday towards transforming American defence strategy for the 21st century, with a request to Congress for an extra \$18.4 billion for the Pentagon's budget for 2002, the biggest increase since the mid-eighties.

Compared with the previous President Mr Bill Clinton's final defence budget last year, it represents an increase of \$33 billion, a 7 per cent rise in military spending, heralding a return to the days of President Reagan's arms build-up.

The 2002 budget, which includes an extra \$2.8 billion for the ballistic missile defence programme, indicates the President's determination to push ahead with weapon systems that will counter emerging threats.

One of the aims of the \$328 billion budget is to boost the morale of the armed forces by improving their pay, accommodation and healthcare. However, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, the defence secretary, cleared that the budget also focused on future threats and the President's commitment to build an "effective missile defence based on the best available technologies deployed at the earliest possible date."

The next budget request, to be presented to the White House in the autumn, is expected to change the American defence policy's focus, away from land forces and armour and to air

ISLAMABAD, June 29. - America has warned Afghanistan's ruling Taliban movement today that they would be responsible for any attack on US interests by Saudi militant Osama bin Laden, the Taliban ambassador said.

The US ambassador, Mr William Milam, delivered the warning about Osama - who has been given shelter by the Taliban - during an hour-long meeting at Kabul's embassy in Islamabad, the Taliban ambassador, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef said. - Reuters

and space systems.

A comprehensive defence review is still under way, but the new strategy is already taking shape. Its aim is to make a final break with the Cold War and to convert the armed forces into self-contained, rapidly deployable formations which can deal with every type of threat. A ballistic missile defence would be a key ingredient of that response.

Other priority defence projects include unmanned aerial vehicles armed with precision-guided missiles, stealth fighter aircraft with long-range weapon systems, and more submarines with long-range cruise missiles. Mr Rumsfeld, yesterday, revealed that two Ohio class submarines which normally carry Trident ballistic missiles are to be converted to carry conventionally-armed cruise missiles.

'Pentagon doubts NMD schedule'

DEUTSCHE PRESSE AGENTUR *WFO 5/25*

NEW YORK, June 25. - An internal study of the US defence department has concluded that testing on the national missile defence programme is behind schedule and unrealistic, a newspaper said today.

The report from Pentagon's office of operational test and evaluation said the NMD has suffered too many failures to justify deploying the system in 2005, a year after the Bush administration is considering deploying one, according to The New York Times.

The defence department report, which was made last August and only recently released to Congress, offers new details about problems the Pentagon has encountered in developing anti-missile technology,

the newspaper added. *2/6*

And it raises questions about how quickly an effective system can be made operational.

The Pentagon is studying proposals to deploy a limited system, but one that would violate the 1972 Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty, as soon as 2004.

In recent weeks, the US defence secretary, Mr Donald H Rumsfeld, has indicated a willingness to deploy a system before tests have been completed if an attack seems imminent.

But as an example of unrealistic testing, the report cited an October 1999 test in which a Global Positioning System inside a mock warhead helped guide an intercept missile towards a target over the Pacific.

That test was successful, but two more recent flight tests failed.

None of those tests used the kinds of sophisticated decoys that a real ballistic missile would use to confuse an anti-missile system, the report said.

Instead, the decoy in each test was a large balloon that didn't look like a warhead and that the kill vehicle's sensors could easily distinguish from the target.

The study also asserted that the Pentagon hadn't even scheduled a test involving multiple targets, the likely situation in an attack. And it found software problems with a training simulator that made it appear as if twice as many warheads had been fired at USA as had been intended in a 1999 exercise.

MAY BE NECESSARY

Argument in favour of the death penalty

THERE was little chance of the appeal in a federal court of a stay against Timothy McVeigh's execution succeeding, since the 3,000-odd pages of documents and tapes that the FBI had not turned over to McVeigh's lawyers had no bearing on his guilt or innocence. Attorney-General John Ashcroft said he had delayed the execution by a month so that McVeigh's lawyers could examine the material and take action as they deemed fit. It is not clear what McVeigh's lawyers were trying to prove or establish, since their client showed absolutely no interest in the manoeuvre. The idea, perhaps, was to find a circumstance or an accomplice, distribute and attenuate the guilt and, thereby, avoid the death penalty. They did not reckon with McVeigh himself, who categorically stated that there was no other person involved in the bombing of the Alfred Murrah federal building in Oklahoma city in May 1998 apart from Terry Nichols who will serve a life sentence. This last minute prevarication was deemed necessary in the interests of justice so that no one could point a finger later on and say that McVeigh was denied a fair trial, which would have had dangerous political repercussions. McVeigh was connected to a number of ultra right-wing racist Christian groups — his attack was in response to the FBI assault on the ranch owned by the Branch Davidian, a messianic Christian cult, in Waco, Texas — who would have immediately used any inaction on the documents to turn him into a martyr and further their own cause.

McVeigh's execution adds an interesting dimension to the debate about the death penalty. He made a pretty forthright choice in favour of the lethal injection against spending the remainder of his life in prison. The difference is marginal but crucial. A life sentence holds out the possibility of parole. But it is very rare that those condemned for heinous crimes will ever be considered safe for society or for a normal life. The psychological conditions created by their own deeds makes the possibility of a relapse into criminality very strong. Besides, is vegetating in prison for the rest of one's days a prospect more charming than the injection or the gas chamber? The answer to this question is subjective, as it was in McVeigh's case, who went into oblivion, flaunting a poem which reads: I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul. Nevertheless, between subjective wishes and objective punishments, there may be something to be said for retaining the death penalty for those who are lost to the world for good, as a necessity, not as charity.

THE STATESMAN

McVeigh betrays no emotions

TERRE HAUTE (INDIANA), JUNE 11. The Government Timothy McVeigh so despised executed him by chemical injection on Monday, taking his life in exchange for the 168 lives lost when he blew up the Oklahoma City federal building six years ago. He died silently, with his eyes open.

In Oklahoma City, 232 survivors and victims' relatives watched a closed-circuit TV broadcast of the execution, sent from Terre Haute in a feed encrypted to guard against interception. Others embraced each other at the memorial marking the bombing site.

The lethal injection was administered to McVeigh's right leg. McVeigh made eye contact with his four witnesses, then with the 10 media witnesses, then squinted toward the tinted window shielding the 10 victims' witnesses from his view. He also stared straight at the victims in Oklahoma City by looking directly into the TV camera.

McVeigh, wearing a white T-shirt, khaki pants and slip-on sneakers, looked pale as he awaited death. His hair was cropped short. A white sheet was pulled up tightly to his chest as he lay on the gurney.

When the first drug was administered, he let out a couple of deep breaths, then a fluttery breath. His head moved back, his gaze fixed on the ceiling, and his eyes were glassy.

In a recent letter to the *Buffalo News*, McVeigh said his body would be released to one of his attorneys and cremated, and his ashes would be scattered in an undisclosed location.

In Oklahoma City, Kathleen Treanor, whose 4-year-old daughter, Ashley, and whose husband's parents died in the bombing, watched the execution on closed-circuit TV. Afterward, she held up a picture of her daughter and said: "I thought of her every step of the way." She said there was no display of emotion in the room as the execution took place.

She said some of the victims were chuckling that they knew McVeigh was dead before the hordes of media outside did.

"I don't think anything can bring me any peace or anything from this. I'll always face the loss of my daughter. I'll never get over that," said Treanor (38). "When I die and they lay me in my grave is when I'll have closure. That's when I'll stop grieving for my daughter."

Larry Whicher, brother of a bombing victim, said McVeigh looked straight into the camera with cold, blank stare in the moments before he died — and that stare said volumes.

"He had a look of defiance and that if he could, he'd do it all over again," Whicher said.

He added: "I don't think he gave himself to the Lord. I don't think he repented and personally I think he's in hell."

Jay Sawyer, who also watched the execution via TV, said: "Without saying anything, he got the final word, absolutely, his teeth were clenched, just like when they showed him coming out of that facility when he was first arrested. His teeth were clenched, his lips were pursed and just a blank stare. It was the same today."

Ms. Janice Smith, whose brother Lanny Scroggins died in the bombing, prayed with her children at the Oklahoma City National Memorial, then left after getting word that McVeigh was dead.

"It's over," she said. "We don't have to continue with him anymore." McVeigh's lawyer, Mr. Robert Nigh, somberly reminded reporters that the Government not only executed the Oklahoma City bomber, but also a soldier, a son and a brother. He said there was "nothing reasonable or moral about what we did today." "If there is anything good that can come from the execution of Tim McVeigh, it may be to help us realise sooner that we simply cannot do this anymore," he said. "I am firmly convinced that it is not a question of if we will stop, it is simply a question of when."

The Attorney-General, Mr. John Ashcroft, who authorised the closed-circuit telecast of the execution, was in Oklahoma City when McVeigh was put to death, a government official said. Mr. Ashcroft did not watch the closed-circuit broadcast but wanted to be with the families of the bombing victims, said the source, speaking on condition of anonymity.

McVeigh received a mixture of sodium thio-pental, to sedate him, pancuronium bromide, a muscle relaxant that collapses the diaphragm and lungs; and potassium chloride, which stops the heart.

Among those allowed to witness were 10 victims' representatives, 10 news media members, including one from The Associated Press, and McVeigh's personal witnesses — Nigh, the defence attorney, Mr. Nathan Chambers, the former defence team member, Cate McCauley, and the *Buffalo News* reporter Lou Michel, who co-wrote a recent book on the bomber. No members of McVeigh's family travelled to Terre Haute, at his request.

McVeigh was born in Pendleton, New York, near Buffalo, in 1968 and raised Roman Catholic in a middle-class environment. At a young age, he developed a keen interest in guns from his grandfather.

As he grew up, he developed a distrust of the Government, yet he joined the U.S. Army and

went on to serve in the Gulf War. He returned more disillusioned with the United States, viewing its treatment of the Iraqi people as that of a schoolyard bully.

Drifting across the country and taking on an increasingly survivalist mentality, he stewed over what he saw as government encroachments on the right to bear arms. The federal raids at the Branch Davidian compound at Waco, Texas, and the cabin of white separatist Randy Weaver at Ruby Ridge in Idaho brought his hatred to a head.

He decided it was time for actions, not words.

McVeigh set his sights on the Oklahoma City federal building. He packed a rented truck with explosives, lit the fuses, parked it outside the federal building and walked away without looking back.

He was condemned to die for the deaths of eight federal law enforcement agents buried in the rubble, but jurors in the death penalty phase of his 1997 trial labelled him responsible for all 168 deaths.

McVeigh's original execution date was May 16, but it was delayed after the FBI revealed it had withheld more than 4,500 documents from the defense during McVeigh's trial. The Justice Department said nothing in the documents cast doubt on the bomber's guilt. — AP

Justice, not vengeance: Bush

death row prisoner in nearly four decades, the USA has allowed vengeance to triumph over justice and distanced itself yet further from the aspirations of the international community," said the London-based human rights group Amnesty International said.

America's penchant for the death penalty puts it ethically at odds with its traditional European allies, which have all banned it. The last person executed in the European Union was killed by guillotine in France in 1977. "The death penalty is a barbarism inappropriate to our times," said Antonio Maria Pereira, president of the Portuguese human rights group Law and Justice.

Controversy surrounding the execution could cast a shadow over Mr. Bush's five-nation tour, which is expected to draw street protests not

only against the death penalty but also against his policies on missile defence and global warming.

Some European media have depicted Mr. Bush as a "serial executioner" because of his record as Governor of Texas, where 152 executions took place during his nearly six years in office.

The U.S. and Japan are the only two rich, industrialised democracies that still regularly put convicted criminals to death.

Many Europeans are puzzled that the U.S., a country that holds itself up as a model of democracy and human rights, continues to carry out death sentences.

McVeigh's execution had particularly strong resonance in Spain, where Mr. Bush was due to arrive on Tuesday morning. — Reuters

WASHINGTON, JUNE 11. The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, today said the execution of the Oklahoma city bomber, Timothy McVeigh, brought justice to the victims of the devastating 1995 blast.

"The victims of the Oklahoma city bombing have been given not vengeance but justice," said Mr. Bush.

Condemnation in Europe
The today unleashed condemnation across Europe on the eve of Mr. Bush's first official visit to the continent.

European opposition to the death penalty outweighed abhorrence at McVeigh's crime.

Critics of capital punishment called it a barbaric, blood-thirsty way of making McVeigh pay for his crime.

"By executing the first federal

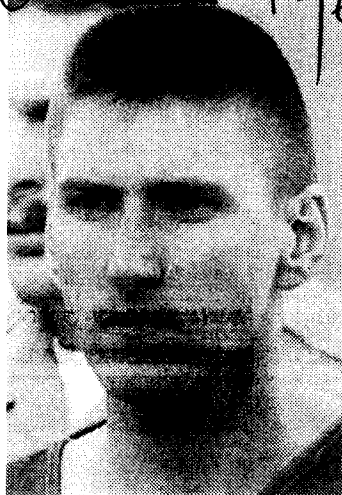
Lethal dose for McVeigh

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JUNE 11. A defiant and unrepentant Timothy McVeigh was today executed in Terre Haute, Indiana, for the blowing up of a federal building in Oklahoma City six years ago that killed 168 persons, including 19 children.

McVeigh, who is the first federal prisoner to be executed in the United States in 38 years, was given a dose of lethal injection at 8 a.m. Eastern Time; 14 minutes later, he was pronounced dead. In Oklahoma City, some 300 survivors and relatives of the bomb victims watched the execution in a closed circuit television broadcast.

McVeigh, according to firsthand witnesses, did not say any last words. The 33-year-old Gulf War veteran issued a copy of the 1875 poem "Invictus" which concludes, "I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul." The lethal injection was administered to McVeigh's right leg who



then momentarily made eye contact with his four witnesses and 10 media witnesses.

Born near Buffalo and raised as a Roman Catholic, McVeigh developed a sense of distrust against the federal government whom he blamed for bullying its citizens. Despite his hatred for the Govern-

ment, he enlisted in the Army and served in the Gulf War. McVeigh is said to have been enraged when federal agents raided the Branch Dravidian compound in Waco, Texas and the cabin of separatist Randy Weaver in Ruby Ridge, Idaho.

On that fateful day in April 1995, McVeigh packed a truck with explosives, left it outside the Alfred P Murrah Federal Building, set the fuses and walked away. It was the worst case of domestic terrorism in the U.S., for which he was convicted and given the death sentence in 1997.

McVeigh's original date with death was May 16, but the Justice Department put it off to today after the Federal Bureau of Investigation stumbled into some 4,000 pages of documents that had not been turned over to the defence. A district court and a federal appeals court rejected the motions for delay and McVeigh ordered his attorneys to cease further avenues of delay.

Another report, photos: Page 14

McVeigh steels himself for execution circus

BY MICHAEL CONLON
Terre Haute (Indiana), June 9: Still publicly unrepentant for taking 168 lives in the worst act of terrorism on US soil, Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh on Friday faced the last days of his life after dropping all further court appeals.

McVeigh's decision to end legal challenges to his execution, appeals that had been based on thousands of pages of belatedly revealed FBI documents, swung the spotlight back to Monday's scheduled execution.

Mr Richard Burr, one of his lawyers, said McVeigh was "steeling himself against this moment and suppressing any fear that anybody would normally have and trying to have himself centred."

Interviewed on the PBS *News Hour* with Mr Jim Lehrer, Mr Burr said McVeigh had said over the years that he was not happy so many people were killed but his target was the federal government and he felt there had to be "a lot of damage" to get the government's attention.

Hundreds of media representatives were gathering in this southern Indiana city preparing to make his death probably the most extensively covered execution the country has seen.

The 33-year-old decorated Gulf War Army veteran, earlier this year defiant and even cocky, according to published reports and other accounts, was isolated and preparing for death inside a federal prison just outside Terre Haute, surrounded by farm fields and the twisting Wabash river.

Prison officials said McVeigh could be moved from his prison cell on death row at any time to the death house — a windowless red-brick building containing a small cell just a few steps from the death chamber — where the execution by lethal injection will take place.

"He has reached the point where he wants us to press no further

and... We must respect that position. Quite frankly, we are not in his position and we don't have to make the mental preparations that he does," one of his lawyers, Robert Nigh, said.

"McVeigh is resolved in his mind about putting an end to this process... I think his demeanour was extremely calm. I think his resolve was clear. He takes this much more in stride than probably his lawyers do, almost certainly," Mr Nigh said, speaking after the judge who presided over McVeigh's trial and an appeals court in rulings over consecutive days refused to halt the execution.

He is to die by a lethal injection

of sodium pentothal, pancuronium bromide and potassium chloride at 7 am on Monday. Death usually occurs within 10 to 15 minutes when the chemicals stop the heart and lungs. The prison's warden, Harley Lappin, will walk to a camera-jammed podium on the edge of the prison grounds to announce the time of death. His last meal, if any, would not be revealed until the day of the execution, the US Bureau of Prisons said. No formal announcement on the disposal of his remains has been made, although his father has said McVeigh asked for cremation, with the ashes to be turned over to his Tulsa-based lawyer Mr Nigh. (Reuters)



FOND MEMORIES: Photos and personal items of victims of the Oklahoma City bombing are displayed at the Oklahoma City National Memorial Museum. (AP)

Prison gets chemicals for killer injection

BY REX W. HUPPKE

Terre Haute (Indiana), June 9: Timothy McVeigh awaited transfer to the windowless brick building where he will be put to death — a journey that will be his last chance to see the sky and breathe fresh air.

The 33-year-old McVeigh abandoned all efforts on Thursday to stave off execution for the Oklahoma City bombing after back-to-back defeats in court. He is set to die by chemical injection at 1200 GMT on Monday in the first execution carried

out by the US federal government since 1963. Prison officials said the chemicals that will be used for the execution have already arrived.

McVeigh is expected to be moved from his cell to the death house no later than Sunday morning, 24 hours before the execution. Prison officials would not say exactly when he would be moved, citing security concerns. McVeigh has already instructed prison officials on what he wants done with his body, his money and any belongings. Prison officials and

McVeigh's lawyers would not say what will happen to the body other than that it will be turned over to a representative of the family. Before his original execution date a month ago, McVeigh had given away most of his belongings to fellow death row inmates, including a picture of himself inscribed with the words: "My head has been bloodied, but it remains unbowed." He gets a final meal of his choosing but he has not yet selected what he will eat.

One complication surfaced on Friday, when a federal judge in

Pittsburgh ordered the execution videotaped for a case alleging the death penalty violates the ban on cruel and unusual punishment. But an appeals judge delayed the order on Friday and a panel of judges later overturned it, blocking the videotaping. Also, one of the people McVeigh selected to witness his execution, author Gore Vidal, announced that he would not be coming to Terre Haute. Vidal is writing a story about McVeigh for *Vanity Fair* magazine. The magazine released a statement on Friday saying that

Vidal is unable to make the trip from his home in Italy because he did not have enough advance notice. Jim Cross, special assistant at the federal prison, said McVeigh had to submit his list of witnesses 30 days before the execution. He said it will be up to the warden whether McVeigh is allowed to substitute another witness. McVeigh was convicted of murder and condemned for the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building that killed 168 people in the deadliest act of terrorism on US soil. (AP)

McVeigh says no to appeals

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JUNE 8. With an appeals court bluntly dismissing his petition, Timothy McVeigh, has decided to forego further avenues of appeal and will now be put to death by lethal injection on Monday in Terre Haute, Indiana.

The three-judge panel of the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals said dismissively that the lawyers for McVeigh "utterly failed to demonstrate substantial grounds" why the Oklahoma City bomber should not be executed next week. McVeigh could have further petitioned the full Appeals Court or taken the matter to the United States Supreme Court. But the Gulf War veteran instructed his lawyers to drop all petition plans. McVeigh has also declined to ask the President, Mr. George W Bush, for clemency.

"Today's ruling by the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals is a ruling in favour of justice... Timothy McVeigh is responsible for the brutal murder of 168 people, including 19 children, and he will now be brought to justice," the Attorney-General, Mr. John Ashcroft said in a statement. McVeigh was scheduled to be executed on May 16 but the discovery by the Federal Bureau of Investigation of some 4,000 pages of documents related to his trial gave a ray of hope to his attorneys. They hoped to prove that credible evidence of the involvement of another person was suppressed; and that such information could have had an impact on a jury which might not have handed McVeigh the penalty.

On Wednesday, the district



Oklahoma City fire Capt. Chris Fields carries 1-year-old Baylee Almon, injured in the bombing on April 19, 1995, at the Alfred Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma city. The child died of her injuries.

judge in Denver, Colorado, denied the motion for delay in execution; and the Appeals Court upheld the ruling the following day. The 33-year-old McVeigh will be the first federal prisoner to be executed since 1963. Legal experts felt that McVeigh sealed his fate several months ago by first dropping all his appeals avenues; and then admitting in a book interview that he alone bombed the Alfred P Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma city in April 1995. McVeigh said the bombing was to avenge the

raids by federal agents in Waco, Texas and in Ruby Ridge, Idaho.

Reports from Terre Haute say preparations are under way for the execution which is set for Monday morning. That morning, McVeigh will take his final short drive from the death row chambers to the execution chamber. According to the warden of the federal facility, although McVeigh has had several months to think about his last meal and order it, the final request has not yet come through.

McVeigh loses death appeal, scheduled to die on June 11

Washington, June 7 *Mc-11*

TIMOTHY MCVEIGH is scheduled to die on Monday, after a Denver judge turned down his appeal for a delay, ruling there was no doubt over his guilt for the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.

McVeigh's lawyers declared their intention to appeal against Judge Richard Matsch's decision. They had claimed that the belated discovery of thousands of pages of documents from the FBI investigation necessitated a stay of execution for further study.

However, Judge Matsch said the documents represented only a tiny part of the huge body of evidence amassed by the FBI and there was nothing in them to cast doubt on the finding that



McVeigh detonated a huge bomb in a rented lorry outside a government building on April 19, 1995, killing 168 people.

The judge described as "just not tenable" the defence claim that the jury in McVeigh's 1997 trial might not have imposed a death sentence if they had seen the new documents.

The federal prosecutor, Sean Connelly, made a brief statement after yesterday's hearing, saying the government was "gratified" by the ruling. US Attorney General, John Ashcroft, who had postponed the execution from May 16 to June 11 after the documents were discovered, said it was "a ruling for justice".

"We've never had a doubt about the guilt about Timothy McVeigh," Ashcroft said. "But it seemed to me that we needed more than a guilty defendant, we needed an innocent system—and today I believe that the ruling of the court makes it clear that we not only have a guilty defendant but we have a system which is fair and innocent."

McVeigh has admitted carrying out the bombing. But his defence team argued that the new evidence added weight to the belief that other, unknown, conspirators were involved in the attack.

The Guardian

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

GOP loses control of Senate

By Sridhar Krishnaswami 20.16

WASHINGTON, JUNE 6. If the media in this country is going to town on the implications of the power change in the Senate, it is not without good reasons. And with the Republicans formally giving up their control of the Senate today after a six-year dominance, the first news stories of the 2004 presidential election have started surfacing.

The departure of Mr. James Jeffords from the Grand Old Party came as a rude shock to party leaders and to the advisors of the President, Mr. George W. Bush. Neither the party leaders nor the key advisors appeared to have realised the seriousness of the situation leading to Mr. Jefford's leaving the party. And towards the end there was this naiveite that Mr. Jeffords could be talked out of his move by offering some "deals".

With the Democrats now in the forefront in the Senate and Mr. Tom Daschle as the Majority Leader, the agenda and the process in the Senate is heading for a huge change. And the Republicans and the Democrats are working out the modalities of the structure of the Committees. Democrats undoubtedly get hold of the chairmanships as they eagerly wait to push their favourite programmes, especially health care and minimum wage.

The buzz word on Capitol Hill still seems to be "bipartisanship" with Mr. Daschle remarking that "Bipartisanship isn't an option, it is a requirement. And it is all the more a requirement now under these circumstances". And the outgoing Republican Majority Leader, Mr. Trent Lott, tried to make the best out of the circumstances by saying that it was important to push the agenda of the American people. Beneath all that soft talk, Mr. Lott is urging the party to begin a "war" for the elections of 2002.

The White House too is trying to make the best out of the current situation. The President met a handful of Senators from both parties to discuss a spending Bill on Education which is now in the Senate. "There is going to be an opportunity for us to work on a variety of issues", the President remarked, making the

point that they could still get things done. But the White House is certainly under no illusions over the kind of challenges it now faces in the Senate on important issues of domestic and foreign policy.

Even before the battle for policies start in the Senate, Republicans and the White House are worried that the President's nominees for the Judicial Branch are in deep trouble because of the power change in the Senate. Some Democrats have openly talked about opposing some of the conservative nominees and the Grand Old Party is seeing if some kind of an accommodative formula could be worked out with

the Democrats. The next presidential election may be more than three years away, but the its mechanics are already being readied with a few potential Democrats making plans to visit Iowa and New Hampshire which traditionally kick off the primary season. It is a long way off for the Democratic party to identify the next challenger to Mr. Bush; and to the GOP, it is in a hope that it will not be dealt another blow.

Mr. Jeffords leaving shook up the establishment; and now there is the serious talk of Mr. John McCain following suit in spite of all the denials put out by the Arizona politician's camp.



The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush (second from left) meets U.S. Senators (from left) Mr. Susan Collins, Mr. Edward Kennedy, Mr. Bill Frist and Mr. James Jeffords, at the White House in Washington on Tuesday. — AFP

McCain denies move to quit GOP

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JUNE 3. The maverick Republican Senator from Arizona, Mr. John McCain, has said that he has neither the intention of running for the Presidency in 2004 nor having plans to quit the Grand Old Party.

The quick response to both these questions come against the backdrop of reports — especially a frontpage story on Saturday in *The Washington Post* — that there were signs of Mr. McCain bolting the GOP and throwing his hat into the Presidential ring of 2004 as a candidate of a Third Party.

“As I have said repeatedly, I have no intention of running for President, nor do I have any intention or cause to leave the Republican Party. I hope this will put an end to further speculation on the subject”, the Arizona politician said in a statement.

There were good reasons for speculation on the moves of Mr. McCain. Just this weekend, the GOP Senator had invited the next Democratic Senate Majority Leader, Mr. Tom Daschle, and Mr. Bruce Reed, a key advisor of the

Clinton administration and their wives to his ranch in Arizona. Mr. McCain's people are making the point that this meeting was arranged months ago and that there will be no policy discussion.

The focus on Mr. McCain comes at a time when the Grand Old Party has lost its “majority” status in the Senate with the party leaders really worried about the health of Mr. Strom Thurmond, the 98-year-old veteran. Next Tuesday, the Democrats formally take charge of the Senate and with this all the Committees. And the expectation is that the White House will be facing an uphill battle in all policy matters, domestic and foreign.

It is not that the GOP merely lost its “majority” status in the Senate. The party and its leadership were really stunned at the manner this came about — the defection of Mr. James Jeffords, who left to become an Independent and announcing that he will caucus with the Democrats for organisational reasons. Some argue that the defection could actually be a blessing in disguise to the President, Mr. George W.

Bush as he really did not need to cater to the whims and fancies of people like the Senator from Vermont. But the larger political implications are totally different.

The White House has never been too comfortable with the ways of Mr. McCain. From Camp David in Maryland, the President called the Arizona Senator and hoped that he “will have a good meeting” with Mr. Daschle; and according to an unnamed administration official, Mr. Bush apparently told Mr. McCain that more members of Congress should get to know each other on a bipartisan basis.

Mr. McCain was a major problem to Mr. Bush during the course of the last Presidential campaign and literally gave the former Texas Governor a run for his money. Since coming to the White House, Mr. Bush has not been quite at ease with Mr. McCain's insistence on having his way on such issues as campaign finance reform. Now the fear — and a real one at that — of Mr. McCain seeking to build a centrist group within the Grand Old Party, or something close to that of the New Democrats.

Key US Senator wary of Bush missile defence plan

BY THOM SHANKER
New York Times Service

Washington, June 2: The next chairman of the Senate armed services committee says it is highly unlikely that missile defences will be deployed during President George W. Bush's current term, and that they should not be deployed at all until repeated tests have proved their effectiveness.

The senator, Mr Carl Levin, Democrat of Michigan, said he was confident that the United States had both the money and the technology to develop missile defences. But he predicted that diplomatic battles over amending or scrapping the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, as well as scientific hurdles, meant that the odds were against any deployment by the end of 2004.

"I don't think the technology is likely to develop fast enough, even if he decided to violate the treaty," Mr Levin said in a telephone interview, referring to Mr Bush and the ABM Treaty.

"And I think our European allies have responded with caution and concern to such a degree that the President is going to have to look again at the complexities of the issue."

In the interview, Mr Levin laid out his agenda, and therefore that of the Senate's new leadership, on military affairs.

He emphasised that he would not occupy himself solely with the high-profile issues of strategic nuclear posture and billion-dollar weapons systems, but would focus on improving pay, health care and housing for those in uniform.

He also said he would try to mod-

ernise the Pentagon's purchasing practices and push for another round of base closings to save money.

Mr Levin energetically endorsed the role played by American troops in peacekeeping operations in the Balkans and in Sinai. Mr Bush and defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld have questioned the peacekeeping missions, saying that they divert money and troops from more important assignments.

As head of a committee widely recognised for striving to maintain a calm, nonpartisan approach to national security, Mr Levin said that he planned to "make sure that we look at the realities of a national missile defence, not just look at that one threat that has been focused on, the North Korea threat, or just the threat from ballistic missiles."

AP
JUN 2 2001

Democrats now have power to frustrate Bush agenda **2004 boost for quiet fixer**

Laura Peek & Martin Fletcher
The Times, London

WASHINGTON, May 25. - The defection of Mr James Jeffords of Vermont makes Mr Tom Daschle America's most powerful and visible Democrat and will give him a considerable boost if he decides to seek his party's presidential nomination in 2004.

The new Senate majority leader did much to entice Mr Jeffords to leave the Republicans. His reward is power and prominence in a party with no other acknowledged leader since Mr Bill Clinton left the White House.

He will control the Senate's legislative agenda and will be in constant demand on American media, giving him a strong platform for a possible White House bid. The down side of his new position is that he will be held accountable if things go wrong.

Yesterday's biggest loser, apart from President Mr Bush, is Mr Trent Lott, the Senate's majority leader since 1996. He faces possible mutiny from ambitious colleagues who may try to oust him as minority leader.

Mr Daschle, a Roman Catholic from South Dakota, is a soft-spoken but fiercely determined politician, whose fund raising skill has made him valuable connections from Wall Street to Hollywood. Mr Robert Ben-

nett, a Republican senator from Utah, called him a "very bright and capable senator, but he is the leader of a party determined to stop the President's agenda".

Mr Daschle struck a conciliatory role in his first comments yesterday, saying: "This will be America's first 50-49-1 Senate. What does not change with this new balance of power is the need for principled compromise." But he emphasised: "We can't dictate to them and they can't dictate to us."

Other possible Democratic nominee for the 2004 include former Vice-President Mr Al Gore, Mr Richard Gephardt, the House of Representatives' minority leader, and senator Mr John Kerry of Massachusetts.

The consequences of Mr Jeffords's decision will be immediate and enormous. The Democrats now have the power to frustrate almost every aspect of Mr Bush's agenda, from missile defence to global free trade negotiations and appointments to top government and judicial posts.

Mr Tom Daschle will replace Mr Trent Lott as the Senate's majority leader. Democrats will take over the chairmanship of every legislative committee. They will have the power to issue subpoenas and order investigations of the sort that crippled the Clinton administration.

Utterly demoralised after last November's

presidential and congressional elections, they could scarcely contain their glee, and their elevation to power will boost their ability to win media time, raise funds and attract candidates.

Mr Jeffords compounded the damage he caused to the party he had served for 26 years in Congress by the manner of his departure. In a press conference he said he had joined the "party of Lincoln" because it embraced the principles of "moderation, tolerance, fiscal responsibility", but felt estranged from today's party.

He expressed deep reservations about Mr Bush's tax-cutting budget, nomination of conservative judges, missile defence programme, environmental policy, education legislation and opposition to abortion rights.

"Increasingly I find myself in disagreement with my party," he said. "It has become a struggle for our leaders to deal with me and for me to deal with them."

However, Mr Bush rejected Mr Jeffords's criticism, saying he "could not disagree more" with the senator's analysis.

"I was elected on behalf of all the American people and to work with both Republicans and Democrats and we are doing just that," he said, pointing to Wednesday's passage of his tax cut Bill as a prime example of how he is working with Democrats.

THE STATES

26 MAY 2001

GOP Senator aligns with Democrats

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 24. In a significant development of the year and one that has tremendous political ramifications, the Republican Senator, Mr. James Jeffords of Vermont, has dropped a bombshell saying he was leaving the Grand Old Party and becoming an Independent.

But what is equally critical is that the 67-year-old law maker will be voting with the Democrats on issues in the floor and for organisational reasons, will be with the Democratic Caucus.

In Burlington, Vermont, Mr. Jeffords in "sharing his thoughts" made the point that given the changing nature of the Republican Party, it was becoming increasingly difficult to stay within and yet disagree; and that this position was going to become more difficult down the road on important issues.

Mr. Jeffords, for example, went against the White House on the Budget. "I have changed my party label, but not my beliefs", remarked Mr. Jeffords.

The announcement was to have come on Wednesday afternoon but was put off till Thursday on the grounds that Mr. Jeffords wanted his decision to be announced from his home State.

And that extra few hours have led to frenzied lobbying by Republicans and Democrats, each trying to make the best of an unexpected political situation.

In the end, the Grand Old Party was left with facing the reality.

The Senate was evenly split. Now, it is 50 Democrats, 49 Republicans and 1 Independent. And Mr. Jeffords making his move will make all the difference to both Republicans and Democrats.

To the Grand Old Party, it is a question of losing the Chair position in Committees and the Democrats standing to gain in the process.



James Jeffords

The new Senate Majority Leader will be Mr. Tom Daschle of the Democrats.

The switch — seen more as a defection — could have been worse, for Mr. Jeffords could have outright joined the Democrats. It is to this end that the White House was working overtime to convince Mr. Jeffords to stay in the party.

On Tuesday, the President, Mr. George W. Bush, and the Vice-President, Mr. Dick Cheney, had separate meetings with the Senator.

The expectation for quite some time was that Mr. Jeffords was becoming increasingly uncomfortable staying in the GOP out of a feeling that being a moderate Republican was not the present trend of a party that was increasingly turning to the Right. Add to this

the fact that Democrats were openly wooing Mr. Jeffords.

For its part, the GOP is actively courting a Conservative Democrat, Mr. Zel Miller of Georgia, so as to balance any move of Mr. Jeffords. But this is not going to materialise either as an outright defection or Mr. Miller also becoming an Independent voting with the Republicans.

In fact, Mr. Miller has quashed speculation over his crossing over and at the same time, asked his fellow Democrats to stop bickering.

In the context of Mr. Jeffords' move, there is the feeling that the White House may have bungled — first by not judging the mood of the Senator and second, by failing to take steps to prevent the political damage.

In fact, there are those who believe that the White House may have contributed to Mr. Jeffords' disaffection by not paying sufficient attention to his interests in such areas as education. Naturally, this is denied by senior White House officials.

Senior Republican law makers were bracing themselves for the final moment nursing the illusion that Mr. Jeffords could be persuaded at the very last minute by offering some kind of leadership position within the GOP. The Vermont law maker obviously could not be won over.

The White House is putting on a brave face, knowing full well that the loss of Committee Chairs is not the only stake in the exit of Mr. Jeffords — the full range of Mr. Bush's domestic and foreign policies will be in deep trouble.

By Democrats formally getting back control of the numbers in the Senate, its leadership can dictate the agenda. The policy differences aside, the Democrats now have a hold on the Bush administration nominees to various posts; and the battle for the judicial appointments has already begun.

THE TRIBUNE

MAY 24 1999

Time sanctions were lifted: Rocca ¹⁹¹⁵ #91

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 18. Sanctions have outlived their usefulness and are an obstacle to engaging both India and Pakistan, says the nominee for the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Ms. Christina Rocca.

Ms. Rocca appeared before the Senate Sub-Committee for Near East and South Asian Affairs for her confirmation hearings on Thursday and basically made the point during the question and answer session that it was time to move on vis-a-vis such punitive measures. "My personal perception is that the sanctions have to go. They have outlived their usefulness and we need to move forward from here and find a new way of approaching our security concerns," she told the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee, Mr. Sam Brownback, Senator.

Ms. Rocca said the Bush administration was in the process of reviewing the entire gamut of sanctions and that though she was not privy to the ongoing discussions, upon confirmation she would make her voice heard.

Obstacle to engagement

"We need to find a new framework and a new way in which to encompass our nuclear concerns



and get rid of these sanctions, which... are just an obstacle to fully engaging with both the nations."

Ms. Rocca, who was with the Operations Department of the Central Intelligence Agency between 1982 and 1997, served Mr. Brownback until recently as senior legislative aide and foreign affairs adviser. The Republican Senator from Kansas has been instrumental in urging the Clinton administration, and now the Republican one, to get rid of the sanctions as part of a larger and deeper engagement strategy with India.

Asked how the Bush administration would explore additional ways of building a relationship

with India and Pakistan, Ms. Rocca said, "I think the first step has to be to lift the sanctions... with India, we should be working on our trade and a host of issues. With Pakistan, we need to rebuild a relationship that is in sad need of rebuilding. And we have a lot of differences which we will need to bridge."

The ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Joseph Biden, asked Ms. Rocca whether the Bush administration would no longer seek the adherence of India and Pakistan to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty — centre-piece of the Clinton administration's discussions with the two South Asian nations.

"I can't speak of the administration's position on CTBT. However, I can tell you that both India and Pakistan, since the new administration has been in place, have reiterated their commitment to maintain the moratorium on testing... the U.S. welcomes the continuation of the testing moratorium and we certainly will continue to get both Governments to exercise restraint."

In her formal statement to the Committee, Ms. Rocca stressed that the Bush administration would continue the policy of sub-

stantive bilateral engagement with India. "The past few years have seen the beginning of a transformation in our relationship with the world's largest democracy. Now is that time to complete that transformation."

'Role beyond S.Asia'

Ms. Rocca — who is expected to clear the Senate Foreign Relations Committee next week and thereafter voted on by the full Senate — said that India was already playing a role "beyond" South Asia, a reference that has been welcomed in the Indian official community.

"That can only be to the good, and we welcome India's new global status. But with that new role come new responsibilities — economic, political and military. In those areas, the U.S. and India can, with effort and cooperation, be partners," Ms. Rocca said.

With respect to Pakistan, Ms. Rocca said it was a long-standing friendship; one that must be sustained and enhanced. "Pakistan is an important regional power and an important Islamic power." She said the Bush administration was committed to working through the difficult economic, political and social challenges facing Pakistan.

THE TIMES

19 MAY 2001

Indians in US cross 1.67 m mark

S Rajagopalan
Washington, May 16

THE INDIAN-AMERICAN population has shot up to 1.678 million, having more than doubled over the past decade. According to the latest US Census Bureau figures, the Indian-American community is the fastest growing segment in the Asian-American block.

What has fuelled the dramatic increase of 106 per cent since 1990 is the massive influx of H-1B visa holders and their families, much of it since 1997. From a mere 2,697 in 1990, the number of H-1B visas issued to Indians soared to 55,047 in 2000.

However, with the reverse flow lately in the wake of an alarming

rise in layoffs in Silicon Valley and elsewhere, doubts are being expressed as to whether the Indian-American community can maintain its growth level, at least in the near-term.

The Census report on Asian-American demographic trends reveals that Indians have during the past decade overtaken their Japanese peers to emerge as the third largest Asian-American group in the US, next only to the Chinese and the Filipinos.

"The numbers show that we (Indians) have a population roughly equivalent to the state of Nebraska. If all of our community lived in that state, we would have three Indian American members in the US Congress."

comments the India Abroad Centre for Political Awareness in its analysis of the figures.

Indian Americans, representing as they do 0.6 per cent of the US population, could have had a fair representation in the State legislatures if not for the fact that they are widely scattered. With this strength, there should have been at least 45 State legislators of Indian origin, as opposed to just two who currently hold office, says the IACPA.

The Asian-Americans table is still being led by the Chinese. The Census Bureau puts their strength at 2.43 million. Filipinos occupy the second slot with 1.85 million, while the Indian-Americans (or 'Asian Indians' as the

Bureau classifies them) come next with 1.67 million. The "other Asian" category, in which people from several countries including Pakistan are lumped together, totals 1.29 million.

After the Indians, Vietnamese have posted the fastest growth in the Asian group. In absolute terms, however, they are in the fifth position with 1.12 million. Koreans follow with 1.1 million. The Japanese (0.79 million) have slipped from the third to the seventh slot during the decade.

The Census Bureau's reports are expected over the next year or two. What it has come up with is a snapshot, giving a broad numerical overview but shorn of any analysis.

Bush Govt. faces domestic, foreign policy challenges

HO-16

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 6. The coming weeks pose domestic and foreign policy challenges for the Bush administration; and one of the first things that law makers will be taking up in the passage of the \$ 1.95-trillion Budget for 2002. The Republicans on Capitol Hill were stung by the embarrassment of the "missing" two pages in the Budget papers that forced a postponement of the vote last week. The Republicans argued that the mess was as a result of a mechanical fault, but the Democrats did not pass up the opportunity to score political points.

The expectation now is that the House of Representatives will have passed the Budget on Tuesday which will be followed by the Senate on Wednesday. It is indeed a test of strength on the floor for the Budget proposals include a large tax cut package along with slowed growth in the Federal programmes.

What is also being pointed out is that the passage of the Budget this week does not mean that the last word has been said on the subject. One certainty is that while Republicans will keep pushing for larger and additional tax cuts, the Democrats — joined by some in the Grand Old Party — will try to make some headway for additional spending on agriculture and defence.

If the President, Mr. George W. Bush, found something very early on in Washington, it is that he would have to compromise on his tax cut numbers. After hanging tough with his \$ 1.6-trillion package, the White House found the going tough in the Senate with Democrats and moderate Republicans unwilling to go along. Finally, the President had to agree for a \$ 1.35-trillion cut and over an 11-year period.

One aspect that is being talked about is that the Budget is merely a guide for the law makers and that the numbers are not binding in any fashion. For instance, the planned Budget for 2002 does not include the additional funding for the Pentagon — a request for which is going to come from the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld. Add to this the fact that law makers routinely push for more money for farmers, education and other projects keeping their respective constituencies in mind.

The Democrats have been clearly unenthusiastic about the President's first 100 days in office; and aside from sharpening the stance

on the budget and tax cut proposals they are now turning their attention to yet another critical area where the Bush administration is trying to leave its Conservative stamp, and for a long time to come.

Democrats have made it known in blunt terms that the President's nominees to the courts are going to get some "special" attention. While the Bush White House is keen on having the "Reagan touch" to the judicial appointments to the Federal Bench, the Democrats on Capitol Hill are equally determined not to let this happen. If the nomination process of Mr. John Ashcroft to the Attorney General's post is any indication, a bitter fight is on the cards, and one in which neither side will give in easily.

On the foreign policy front, the White House has its task cut out as well; and this goes well beyond Washington's trying to "reach out" to allies and friends on strategic affairs including the nuclear arsenal and the controversial National Missile Defence system. The throwing out of the United States from the membership of the United Nations Human Rights Commission is a critical reminder of the kind of perceptions the world at large has about the Bush administration's foreign policy.

The setback to the U.S. at the Human Rights Commission goes much beyond the unhappiness among nations of Washington's constant lecturing and pontifications on human rights and religious freedom. More importantly, it is a reminder to the White House that even allies and friends are perturbed at the unilateralism in American foreign policy, be it with respect to the National Missile Defence system or walking away from the Kyoto Protocol.

The real danger to the Republican administration is the temptation to dance to the tunes of some on Capitol Hill who have threatened to make a linkage between being thrown out of the Human Rights Commission and holding up the agreed funding of U.S. dues to the United Nations.

The sooner the Bush administration works to dispel this notion, the better it would be for the longer range objectives of American foreign policy. Playing along with a handful of law makers who, as it is, have little use for the world body risks further alienation of the U.S. in the international system.

THE HINDU

7 MAY 2001

ND-12 Democrats attack Bush's vision for security 375

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 2. In being short on details about his missile defence plan or in "reaching out" to Russia, the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, has sparked scepticism in many quarters, especially in the country. Mr. Bush's speech at the National Defence University on Tuesday may be what the Conservatives and the right wing wanted to hear, but Democrats were quick to criticise him.

"We fear the President may be buying a lemon here. There has not been a shred of evidence that this works," said the Senate Minority Leader, Mr. Tom Daschle, referring to the missile defence system. And the ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Joseph Biden, argued that while he would support funding for research and development for a Theatre Missile defence, he was against any elaborate missile defence plan. "... we should not head down the Star Wars road again," he said.

Urgent threat

In making his pitch for the missile defence system, Mr. Bush touched on a favourite theme of his and that of his administration — the dangers of more nations having weapons of mass destruction at their disposal. "Most troubling of all, the list of these

countries includes some of the world's least responsible states. Unlike the Cold War, today's most urgent threat stems not from thousands of ballistic missiles in Soviet hands, but from a small number of missiles in the hands of these states — states for whom terror and blackmail are a way of life," Mr. Bush said.

To Democrats and other critics of the proposal, there were at least two factors to be reckoned with. First, the project was so esoteric and on the lines of the Strategic Defence Initiative of the Reagan administration days that its feasibility was in question. Second was the cost. The proposal for a sea, land and space-based system could cost up to \$1 trillion, said Mr. Biden.

The missile defence system was not the only thing that caught the attention of sceptics at home and abroad. Mr. Bush did not say it in as many words but the message on the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty was unambiguous. He condemned the treaty as a Cold War relic saying it was time to make a "clear and clean break with the past". This must have been like music to the ears of the right wing, who for long had little or no use for the treaty.

Canada, for instance, said a U.S. decision to abandon the ABM treaty could trigger an arms race. "We have made a number of points clear to the United States

in the various discussions we have had. Number one is that we think a unilateral abrogation of the ABM Treaty would be very problematic for us," the Foreign Minister, Mr. John Manley, said in Ottawa.

Campaign pledge

If some felt Mr. Bush's speech had little surprises, it was not without reason. In the first place, the President was sticking to a campaign pledge on the National Missile Defence and said he favoured a system that took into account the interests of the U.S. and its allies in Europe and Asia.

And secondly, if the President did not come up with specific numbers in nuclear arsenals reductions, the Conservative camp has been calling for a more informal arrangement without pegging it to specific numbers to have the element of flexibility. Once again the President has obliged his domestic constituency.

Mr. Bush called his Russian counterpart, Mr. Vladimir Putin, before the address at the NDU, and the White House said Mr. Putin was apparently appreciative of the call from the American leader. Mr. Bush's positive references to Russia in the post-Cold War environment has given the outward impression that the Republican administration is keen on working with the Russians on the new "framework". //

THE HINDU

Whites a minority in half of U.S. cities

WASHINGTON, MAY 1. Whites are now in a minority in almost half of America's 100 biggest cities, according to figures from the 2000 census published on Monday.

Although the great metropolitan centres such as New York, Los Angeles and Chicago have long been ethnic melting pots, smaller and more traditionally European-American cities have joined the list of places where blacks, Hispanics and Asians combine to outnumber whites. They include Boston, where the white population has fallen from 59 per cent in 1990 to 49.5 per cent. The city where the sitcom Cheers was set — a programme without a leading black character — was famed more for its Irish culture. But it is a typical example of the changing ethnic face of urban America.

Another traditionally white city where people of European origin are now in the minority is Milwaukee, home of the Harley-Davidson motorcycle, Miller Lite beer and the clean-cut all-American lifestyle popularised in the children's television programme Happy Days. There, the white proportion of the city has dropped from 61 per cent in 1990 to 45 per cent.

Sacramento, the capital of Cali-

fornia (53-40), Philadelphia (52-42) and San Diego (59-49) are also now majority black and Hispanic cities.

Anaheim, California, has dropped from a 57 per cent white population to only 36 per cent. The census figures show that 18 cities changed status from majority white to minority white, leaving only 52 "white" cities in the largest 100.

Overall, out of a population of 58.4 million in the 100 largest cities, only 43 out of every 100 people are "non-Hispanic white". Ten years ago, that figure was 52 out of 100.

The change is largely attributable to an enormous growth in Hispanic populations; the percentage of blacks living in urban areas has actually slightly dropped.

There were 19 cities which would have showed an overall drop in population were it not for dramatic increases in Hispanics, including Los Angeles, Miami, Dallas and Minneapolis.

Experts say the figures partly reflect the accelerated trend in the early 1990's for white people to move from cities to the suburbs. — ©Telegraph Group Limited, London, 2001

Bush gets impressive 100-day report card



George W. Bush

WASHINGTON: Top advisors to President George W. Bush defended his record after 100 days in office on Sunday, reluctantly participating in what has become a Washington ritual for examining the performance of new presidents as the opposition aired ads slamming his policies.

"The President has changed the way Washington talks about its job. Civility is back in Washington and Democrats and Republicans can have a disagreement without being disagreeable," White House chief of staff Andrew Card said on CBS' *Face the Nation*.

"There's a lot more than civility that's needed to get to the bipartisan consensual solutions that the President said he wanted, and I think the country needs," responded Representative Richard Gephardt, Democratic leader in the House of Representatives.

Mr. Gephardt, appearing on the same show, said Mr. Bush's actions show he would rather please the corporate special interests that helped him win the White House than work with Democrats for the good of all Americans. Democrats have seen Mr. Bush as especially

vulnerable on the environment, where he has reversed or delayed several initiatives by former president Bill Clinton and where polls show a significant number of Americans lack confidence in his leadership.

A Democratic National Committee television ad unveiled on Thursday focuses on the controversial decisions to delay implementation of standards to reduce arsenic in drinking water and drill for oil in a wildlife refuge in Alaska, and a leaked proposal later disavowed by the agriculture department to stop screening ground beef for school lunches for salmonella.

"This administration will be judged over the totality of its record. And at the end of the day, people are going to see this is a man, an outdoorsman, who wants to do what he did as governor of Texas and that is, leave the air, the water, the land cleaner than when he found it," responded Bush advisor Karl Rove on NBC's *Meet the Press*.

Examining a new President's record after 100 days in office has become a ritual in Washington since 1933, when then-president Franklin Delano Roosevelt pushed 16 bills through the Congress in 100 days in an effort to end the Great Depression.

Historians and media analysts have said the 100-day mark is arbitrary and not significant as

a way of judging the success of a new administration.

"I think the most important thing that this 100 days does is to serve as a shakedown cruise for the President himself," presidential historian Doris Kearns Goodwin said on NBC's *Meet the Press*.

Among analysts, a look at Mr. Bush's first 100 days drew comparisons to Mr. Clinton, the unspoken target of the President's campaign pledge to restore civility in Washington.

"Mr. Bush succeeded in 100 days in not being Mr. Clinton. And not being Mr. Clinton is a big step forward," said William Safire, a *New York Times* columnist. Ms. Goodwin said Mr. Bush has overreacted to what she called Mr. Clinton's overexposure by being less visible than he should be. "The problem is that the main job of a President is to engage the public in their presidency, to be a public communicator," she said.

Mr. Bush at first declined to consider his first 100 days a milestone for evaluating his presidency, but relented in the face of massive media coverage.

"What we are marking is not 100 days of my presidency; it is 100 days of the Congress and the President working together for the American people," Mr. Bush said on Saturday in his weekly radio address. (AFP)

U.S. team will check spy plane in China

BEIJING: A U.S. team was en route to China on Monday to inspect the spy plane that brought turmoil to U.S.-China relations after colliding with a Chinese fighter and landing on a Chinese military base.

"They are en route and in the air on the way to Honolulu (Hawaii) now and so it will be Tuesday probably at the earliest (that they will arrive)," U.S. ambassador to China Joseph Prueher told journalists.

"We're pleased that we were able to get the initial step... to get the airplane back and I think it's a good step," he said. Beijing agreed on Sunday to allow U.S. personnel to inspect the plane after several rounds of consultations on the April 1 collision that resulted in the loss of the Chinese jet and its pilot.

Mr. Prueher said it had not been decided if the inspection team would go directly to southern Hainan island, where the EP-3 surveillance aircraft has been held since the collision, or to Beijing for briefings. (AFP)

Cincinnati rocked by racial violence

CINCINNATI: With police in riot gear out on the streets, the mayor of this city declared a state of emergency and imposed a curfew amidst the worst outbreak of racial violence in Cincinnati since the aftermath of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr in 1968.

Mayor Charles Luken acted on Thursday, the fourth day of rioting over the shooting of an unarmed black man by a white police officer.

"Despite the best efforts of the good citizens of our city, the violence on our streets is uncontrolled and it runs rampant," Mr Luken said.

The time has come to deal with this seriously.

The message is that the violence must stop.

Only people going to and from work in this city of 331,000 will be allowed on the streets between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., the mayor said.

Seven curfew violators were arrested, but two hours into the curfew, the streets were quiet.

Governor Bob Taft ordered the state highway patrol to assist the police, and the mayor said he may ask Mr Taft to send in the national guard.

As of Thursday, 86 people have been arrested for looting, arson, vandalism, assaults and other violence in the mostly black sections of Cincinnati.

More than 60 people have been injured, with at least 25 taken to hospitals, the police said. (AP)



A demonstrator tells mounted police officers to move after they blocked a street to prevent a crowd from moving into downtown Cincinnati on Wednesday, where protests continue over the shooting of a black teenager by police over the weekend.

APR 2 1968

3 4 APR 2001

Sophie left with no choice, but to quit PR firm

LONDON: Tarrd by a scandal over the embarrassing remarks she made to a tabloid reporter posing as an Arab Sheikh, Sophie, countess of Wessex, announced on Sunday that she would step down as chief executive officer (CEO) of her public-relations firm.



Countess Sophie

But Sophie, the wife of Queen Elizabeth II's youngest son, Prince Edward, said she wanted to continue to have a professional career. Buckingham Palace said it supported that aspiration, but it would look into ways to avoid conflict of interests if members of the royal family choose to pursue business interests outside.

The Sophie affair—reminiscent of the days of the late Princess Diana, who often caused her royal in-laws similar consternation—has mesmerised Britons for the past week, since it emerged that the countess had been caught in a sting by a tabloid journalist posing as a prospective client. Various versions of what was said have been printed in the tabloids, but from all

accounts it was clear that the conversation took an indiscreet turn, with Sophie commenting freely on the policies of Prime Minister Tony Blair, the love life of Prince Charles and other no-go topics.

In Sunday's statement, Sophie expressed regret over any embarrassment, above all to the Queen. "I am deeply distressed by the carrying out of an entrapment operation on me and my business, but I also much regret my own misjudgment in succumbing to that subterfuge," she said, adding that she would step aside as chairman of her public-relations firm.

Sophie's mother-in-law, the Queen, took a surprisingly understanding tone—at least in public. "Her Majesty accepts that despite the difficulties of recent days, both the earl (Prince Edward) and the countess understandably want to try to pursue working careers, and they have her full support in doing so," the palace said in a statement. "It is not an easy option, and they are breaking new ground, but it is right in this day and age that they should be allowed to do so."

The contretemps began when the *News Of The World* tabloid sent a reporter disguised as a

wealthy Sheikh to discuss a fictional business deal with the countess.

The transcript—published in the paper's Sunday edition, after the tabloid reneged on an earlier agreement to quash it in exchange for an interview with Sophie—said the countess suggested that Queen Elizabeth stood in the way of Prince Charles marrying his longtime lover Camilla Parker Bowles. So long as the 100-year-old royal matriarch lives, "it's very hard for anybody to publicly recognise Camilla," Sophie said, according to the transcript.

Sophie also reportedly opined that Mr Blair was ignorant of life in rural Britain—currently being ravaged by the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease—and that Blair's wife Cherie is "even worse, she hates the countryside". The transcript said the countess complimented the intelligence of Conservative Party leader William Hague but criticised his speaking style, saying, "He sounds like a puppet, unfortunately."

Earlier, *The Mail On Sunday* got hold of at least part of the tapes' contents and published them on April 1. It did not say where it got them, but cited "accounts" of the tapes, suggesting they were leaked. (AP)

BUSH ACTS AS MAN OF PRINCIPLE

By WILLIAM FRANKEL in WASHINGTON

SR 6
2/13
PRESIDENT Bush this week completed his second month in the White House and information is dribbling out comparing his working habits with those of his predecessor. He is said to be much more disposed to delegate than was President Clinton, nor does he work anywhere near such long hours. Mr Bush is meticulously punctual in keeping his appointments — and ending them — and takes time off during the day for exercising on his treadmill. His weekends are almost totally recreational either at the presidential Camp David or his own Texas ranch.

He is generally described as laid back and easy going, but these characteristics are not obvious either in his appearances before the public or in his actions in his presidential role. Even though he lost the popular vote and owes his position to a controversial Supreme Court decision, he presents the appearance of possessing an electoral mandate for what is, so far, an undeviating conservative programme. Its chief beneficiaries appear to be the business interests which supported his candidature.

With his approval, the Republican majority in Congress recently reversed the regulations approved by President Clinton which imposed certain obligations on employers to improve working conditions. Almost simultaneously, the Senate moved to revive a bankruptcy bill that Mr Clinton had vetoed. In both cases, financial interests were the gainers while the losers were groups which had supported Mr Bush's Democratic opponent, Mr Al Gore.

Both these acts were in conformity with the President's election promises and supported the view in his camp that he is a man of principle. That could not, however, be said of another of his recent decisions. In his election campaign, Mr Bush had pledged to "establish mandatory regulation targets" for carbon dioxide emissions by power plants, following international proposals for the reduction of global warming. But this week he reneged on that promise which his spokesman disarmingly described as a mistake.

U-TURN

During the campaign, Mr Bush had outbid his opponent on this score. In more than one speech he had made the point that he was promising mandatory reductions while Mr Gore was only calling for voluntary action. Mr Bush has now adduced two reasons for his change of mind.

The first was that, according to the present state of knowledge about global warming, it was not conclusively proved

the...
less...
was that a study by the Energy Department concluded that restricting these emissions from power plants would raise energy prices by driving plants to use natural gas, a more expensive fuel than coal. Higher cost would lead to higher prices and that would harm the consumer and the economy.

The u-turn must have caused the President some embarrassment. Only a few days earlier, his appointee, Mrs Whitman who is the head of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had reiterated this administration's commitment to the carbon dioxide emission policy. When the policy rever-

sal was announced, the EPA could only say that it would "follow the President's lead".

All reports indicated that Mr Bush had come under strong pressure from the conservative wing of his party and from industrial groups which had made significant financial contributions to his campaign exchequer. When they gained the backing of the Vice President, Mr Dick Cheney, (who has been described as Mr Bush's Prime Minister), the acquiescence of the President was inevitable.

While these subjects made comparatively little impact on public opinion, the downturn in the stock market does affect many millions of Americans. Fifty per cent of all American households own shares and many are impressed by the opinion now being heard that Mr Bush bears some responsibility for the current slide. Democrats are accusing him of talking down the economy by hinting of a possible recession in order to gain support for the expansive tax cuts he has long and forcefully been advocating.

PRO-RICH

An aversion to taxation is common among the industrialists and financiers who play a prominent role in the Bush administration, so that it is not surprising that tax cutting should be at the core of its economic policy. The President argues that, with the national budget in surplus (the achievement of the Clinton years though, not unnaturally, the Republicans do not award their political opponents credit for this achievement), the overpayment by taxpayers should be refunded to them. The bulk of the taxation revenue having come from business and the rich, they would naturally be entitled to the lion's share of the refund.

The Democrats do not agree. They approve of some tax reduction but want more money to be applied to the social services, education and other purposes which benefit the country as a whole and, particularly, those in need. The Senate being equally divided, the President will not find it easy to achieve his windfall for the wealthiest. He is therefore trying to persuade public opinion that, because "our economy is beginning to splutter", the tax cuts will encourage growth by putting more money in people's pockets. However, in projecting a gloomy picture of the economy, his critics argue that he has undermined consumer confidence and that this has exacerbated the stock market downturn.

Two weeks ago, the stock market had its biggest fall in eleven years. If those paper losses lead to a drop in spending, that could end ten years of uninterrupted economic growth and that would have world-wide repercussions. Unperturbed, President Bush denies that he is talking down the economy and is encouraged by the fact that the House of Representatives has already approved his extensive tax cuts.

The Senate is acting more cautiously and the debate will be lengthier than that which preceded the vote in the lower house. One thing can be said for certain and that is that the President will not have it all his own way. The only question is whether, after all the probable amendments have been voted upon, he will have gained enough to call himself the winner in his first serious confrontation with the Senate.

THE STATESMAN

24 MAR 2001

USA recruits scientists to build spy satellites

BY MICHAEL
THE TIMES, LONDON

WASHINGTON, March 19.

Thousands of American scientists are being quietly recruited to build a vast new network of spy satellites, in a top secret \$5 billion project that will enable America to peer into every corner of the globe at any time with more accuracy.

Some Californian aerospace companies will employ about 20,000 people to build the new generation of spy satellites over the next 20 years. This is reportedly the biggest intelligence-related contract, the *Los Angeles Times* reported yesterday.

Using high-powered telescopes and radar, two dozen spy satellites will be able to take pictures anywhere in the world, day or night, regardless of the weather. They will be able to zoom into specific areas and send back thousands of images. The project is expected to cost more than the 'building' of the atom bomb.

There are about six spy-satellites now in orbit. These will be replaced by smaller, more powerful and more versatile

satellites that will play a key role in American intelligence-gathering for decades.

The project, officially known as Future Imagery Architecture, is being co-ordinated by the National Reconnaissance Office, a secretive and well-financed government intelligence agency.

The NRO has released only a brief statement, saying that Boeing has won the contract to launch and operate "the nation's next generation of imagery reconnaissance satellites".

About 5,000 scientists and computer programmers will be involved in the project in the next five years, during the initial design phase. Many more will be needed to build and operate the system.

"The programme is a top secret. Most people working on it won't know what they are doing," Mr Loren Thompson, a defence analyst at the Lexington Institute, said.

The project was partly inspired by intelligence problems encountered during the

Gulf War, when military commanders complained that satellite reconnaissance photographs were patchy and insufficiently detailed and late to arrive.

The new system will be able to focus on a single area for twice as long as the existing satellites, beaming back up to 20 times as many high-resolution images of ground activities. Most of the research and development work on the new breed of satellites is likely to be carried out at the Boeing

plant in El Segundo, California. The company has started recruiting technicians from Lockheed Martin Corporation, which has built many of existing spy satellites. Refuges from ailing high-tech and Internet companies are also being recruited.

"I don't think most people are aware of how big this thing is," a spokesman for the California Technology, Trade and Commerce Agency, said. The new satellites will be smaller than the 15-ton models now

in orbit, and positioned further out in space, making them far harder to detect.

Advanced optical and radar technology will enable the satellites to 'take pictures with greater frequency, while the higher orbit will allow the target area on the ground to be filmed for a longer period.

The NRO, which dates back to 1960, has an annual budget of dollars 6 billion and spends more than either the CIA or the National Security Agency.

THE STATESMAN

20 MAR 2001

THE VICTIMS AND THE PERPETRATOR: The family of one of the students killed in the Santana High School shooting grieves together and (right) Andy Williams who pulled the trigger.

Gun crazy

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TWO YEARS after Columbine High School, it was the turn of Santee, California. Fifteen-year-old Andy Williams — teased, taunted and called someone who had no guts — pulled a gun in the bathroom. And the rest was of a piece with what has come to haunt the American school system — two fellow teenagers dead and at least 13 others injured. What fellow students initially thought was noise from fire-crackers was not something that “innocent”.

The problem is not all confined to public schools. Even as Santana High School in Santee was in mourning, a young girl in the eighth grade Roman Catholic school in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, shot her classmate in the shoulder and then put the weapon to her own head. Fortunately, Elizabeth Bush was talked out of her suicide attempt and her classmate too survived the ordeal. As the case is always, parents, teachers and children along with law enforcement and other officials are going through not just the trauma but also coming to grips with the real lessons of these tragedies.

At a time when politicians are talking about bringing about major changes in the quality of the American schools, the larger question is if along with quality, discipline too should be part of the package. But, at the same time, if educationists and politicians are far apart on the issue of quality schools and students, law officials and counselling staff are no better in preventing students from pack-

ing a weapon along with books and pencils, something so vividly captured in a recent *Time* magazine cover photo.

Another facet to school shootings and violence is the issue of access to guns. Guns at home — weapons owned by fathers and grandfathers. Have they been properly kept away from youngsters? The pro and anti gun lobbies turn up the rhetoric after every tragic event. All said and done, there is also the sad realisation that schools are not what they once were; the fact that some institutions have their students go through metal detectors does not exactly reflect a very conducive environment. Suddenly, it is not about guns in America, but about

Shootings by teenagers have come to haunt the American school system. SRIDHAR KRISHNASWAMI on the issues involved.

guns in the hands of kids.

There are several elements that go to make up a disturbing environment even if some would dispute the argument that the scene is so troubling as to warrant immediate, quick-fix solutions. In the aftermath of what took place at the Columbine High School two years ago and what happened in Santee, some of the focus has been on the psychological make-up of the young person who feels it necessary to pull a gun on his fellow students, even friends. But

getting into the mind of the troubled child is often as difficult as trying to figure out why it is that so many knew that trouble was brewing but yet no one came forward with information.

Getting into the mind of the “teen killer” is what part of the focus has been on in recent months. It was not that Andy Williams or Elizabeth Bush did not have friends or were so out of the mainstream. In the aftermath of the shooting at Santana High School, it was quickly common knowledge that Andy Williams moved from Maryland, had a broken home and was constantly picked on by the older and bigger lads in the school. And it could be that Andy Williams resented

where he came from, and perhaps more so his peers many of whom had little to no use for him.

In fact, what surprised many was that during his arraignment neither his father nor his mother was present. And a lad so full of promise at 15 hardly showed remorse for what he had done. Both parents have apparently made the point that they wished to stay out of the media; and the father, according to one version, has said that he cannot afford a lawyer and hence Andy Williams has a public

defender. If he is found guilty on every one of the charges presented by the prosecution, the jail term could total 500 years. That was hardly on the top of Andy Williams' mind when he appeared in court. But does anyone know what was?

Is it just a case of a young person who is “picked on” in school going on the rampage? Is it more of teenage boastfulness that prompts youngsters go in a particular direction? Or is it actually a case of someone being egged on — a so-called sissy wanting to show that he is someone else? In the case of Andy Williams, information culled in the aftermath of the shooting has shown that everyone of the above elements had a role to play. And the situation was not much different in the private school in Pennsylvania where the young girl had apparently been harassed and bullied.

“Don't look for a pattern; by the time you find it, you will find a counter-argument wrapped around it. Is it the absence of parents, the presence of guns, the cruelty of the culture, the culture of cruelty? School shootings are like plane crashes, rare but riveting for the primitive fears they evoke,” writes Nancy Gibbs in *Time*. At the same time, the larger question to be addressed is if in the search for a pattern, there is the danger of losing track of the real motivations and attitudes. And, above all, the tendency to delink the individual from the environment.

US scraps 23 special envoy posts

Washington, March 13

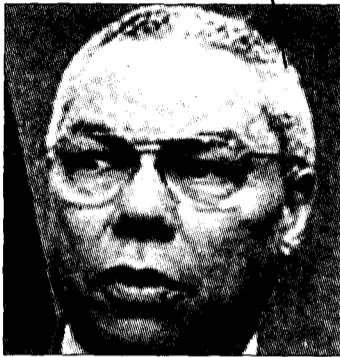
THE BUSH administration is abolishing about 40 per cent of the special envoy positions that existed in the Clinton era, including the West Asia job in which special mediator Dennis Ross worked a dozen years without finding a formula for peace.

Secretary of State Colin Powell decided to fill temporarily the special envoy's position that coordinates with opponents of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Of the 55 positions that former President Clinton created to focus on specific issues or parts of the world, Powell is abolishing 23, department spokesman Richard Boucher said Monday. These are positions over and above the normal ambassadors posted in various nations around

the world.

The special assignments will now become the responsibilities of the State Department's region-



al bureaus. Powell acted "by and large in order to work these issues in a regional context,

within the regional bureaus, and not have them as separate offices and separate functions", Boucher said.

The secretary had been expected to cut some of the jobs since his comment at his Senate confirmation hearing in February that there were "a very large number of envoys running around," and he wanted "to make sure we really need them."

Clinton frequently used high-profile diplomatic missions by a person or a small group to tackle international crises. Powell himself was in one, a 1994 mission to Haiti with former President Jimmy Carter and then Sen. Sam Nunn.

They persuaded the island's military rulers to step down and averted at the last minute a U.S. invasion. **AP**

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

1 1 1999 2001

Federal court will probe Clinton's pardon to fugitive

NEW YORK: A Federal prosecutor and the FBI on Friday announced that they had opened a criminal investigation into the pardon granted to fugitive financier Marc Rich by former president Bill Clinton on the final day of his administration.



Bill Clinton

Clinton on the final day of his administration.

Mary Jo White, the United States attorney in New York, and the FBI's head for New York, Barry Mawn, said in a joint statement that questions remained concerning the pardons of Mr Rich and his associate Pincus Green. The two agencies opened their investigation to determine whether there had been a violation of the Federal law. *11-14*

The announcement corroborated local media reports that indicated that Ms White was interested in the contributions to the Democratic Party made by Mr Rich's ex-wife Denise.

Mr Clinton, expressing bewilderment over the storm that has been stirred up, denied that he had muddied his hands. "There is not a single, solitary shred of evidence that I did something wrong, or that his (Rich's) money changed hands," Mr Clinton said. "There's certainly no evidence that I took any of it." Mr Rich had been charged with evading \$48 million in taxes before he fled Switzerland. *(Agencies)*

THE TIMES OF INDIA

17 FEB 2011

Spectre of fresh Clinton impeachment

S. Rajagopalan
Washington, 12

FOR THE Republicans, Clinton out of office is proving to be as much a red rag as Clinton in office. Three weeks after Mr Bill Clinton left the White House, Senator Arlen Specter has raised the spectre of a fresh impeachment bid over his controversial pardon of billionaire fugitive Marc Rich.

On Sunday, Mr Specter, a senior member of the Judiciary Committee and a former prosecutor, claimed that Mr Clinton could "technically" be impeached. "I'm not suggesting that it should be

done, but President Clinton technically could still be impeached," he told Fox News.

Legal opinion, however, is divided on whether the US Constitution allows the Congress to pursue an impeachment case in respect of a Presidential pardon and, that too, when the President in question has demitted office.

The Republican Senator from Pennsylvania, while insisting that impeachment proceedings could be set in motion if "someone" in the House of Representatives raises the issue, says a President could be impeached for the emoluments of office, such as the substantial sums being spent on his library, bodyguards and pension.

"Give me a break," snapped Clinton spokesperson Julia Payne when the former President's reaction was sought on the Senator's contention. As she put it, the only

thing clear from the Republicans' "continued piling-on" was their bid to "impeach" eight great years of progress and prosperity under Mr Clinton.

Mercifully for Mr Clinton, there is no unanimity within the Republican Party itself over the sort of action it wants on the Rich pardon issue. Mr Don Nickles, the Senate's second-ranking Republican leader, publicly voiced his opposition to any fresh impeachment bid. He, however, favoured reducing Mr Clinton's pension and other allowances.

Democrats have not quite been supportive of Mr Clinton in this controversy. In fact, one senior Democratic Senator Joseph Bidden commented: "I think either the President had an incredible lapse in memory or was brain-dead when he did that one." Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle,

however, sought to deflect the criticism by commenting: "I think the time has come for us to move on."

The first time round, Mr Clinton had staved off impeachment in the Senate after the House of Representatives had voted for his impeachment in the Monica Lewinsky scandal. The Senate acquittal in February 1999 owed itself to support from some Republicans, including Senator Specter.

Explaining his change of stance on impeachment issue, Mr Specter said Mr Clinton at that time "had not lost the confidence of the American people and we didn't want to shake up the government". It is a different situation now as "he's not in office anymore".

The impeachment bid over the Rich pardon may not gather momentum, but Mr Clinton's troubles seem to be far from over.



U.S. Senate clears \$ 582 m. U.N. dues

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, FEB. 8. The United States Senate voted 99 to 0 to release \$ 582 millions to the United Nations as a part of the deal crafted by the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Jesse Helms. A long time critic of the world body, Mr. Helms also ensured in the process that the share of the U.S. in peace-keeping and general operations was lowered. WSO

"Just as only Nixon could go to China, only Helms could fix the U.N.", the ranking Democrat in the Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Joseph Biden, remarked. The roll call vote, the first legislative piece of the new Congress, was welcomed at the U.N. headquarters. "The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has kept faith with the United Nations by voting to free up the money, and now the Senate has endorsed the vote", the U.N. spokesman, Mr. Fred Eckhard, said in New York. 9/2 BID-16

The focus is now in the House of Representatives where the same piece of legislation would have to be passed. In the past, Senators have been somewhat frustrated by what House Republicans have resorted to in spite of broad agreements with the leadership there.

The Helms-Biden legislation drawn up in 1999 pave the way for \$ 926 millions to the U.N. The U.S. paid the first installment of \$ 100 millions in December 1999 and the final installment of about \$ 225 millions will be paid next year, provided changes are carried out in several U.N. bodies such as the World Health Organisation and the International Labour Organisation.

Last December, the General Assembly also agreed that the share of the U.S. for the general operations will drop — on a graduated basis — from 25 per cent to 22 per cent; and for peace-keeping from 31 per cent to 26.5 per cent by 2003. Mr. Helms is making the point that although the ceilings are higher than the limits set by Congress in 1994, the cuts will save the U.S. \$ 170 millions annually.

THE HINDU

- 9 FEB 2001

Gore, Clinton in blunt face-off

FROM JOHN F. HARRIS

Washington, Feb. 7 They were two political partners who had barely spoken for a year, but a few days after Al Gore conceded the 2000 presidential election he and Bill Clinton were finally talking face to face.

For more than an hour, in what sources close to both men described as uncommonly blunt language, Gore forcefully told Clinton that his sex scandal and low personal approval ratings were a major impediment to his presidential campaign. Clinton, according to people close to him, was initially taken aback but responded with equal force that it was Gore's failure to run on the administration's record that hobbled his ambitions.

The White House meeting, which Gore sought, was a doleful postscript to a relationship that once was exceptionally close but had deteriorated badly over the course of Gore's 2000 race. Its significance, however, was more than personal. The question the two men were debating — why did Gore not capture the White House? — is the same one confronting Democrats broadly as they assess the lessons of 2000. If Gore hopes to seek the presidency again, moreover, several Democratic strategists say he will almost certainly need to establish a better footing for his relationship with Clinton who despite the blunders that marked his exit from the White House remains a powerful figure within the party.

Only Clinton and Gore were present for the showdown session,

which never appeared even on internal schedules distributed to White House staff. But people close to both have described its tone in similar language.

"Tense," was the description of one adviser to Clinton, while a Gore aide called it "cathartic."

One Democrat who has worked closely with both men called the session "very, very blunt."

Where descriptions differ is on the conclusion of the meeting. Some Democrats who heard descriptions from one or the other of the two participants said the meet-

ing essentially ratified what for many months had been an unspoken truth between the two men: their relationship suffered irreparable harm in the wake of the Monica S. Lewinsky scandal and



Clinton, Gore.

Clinton's lies to Gore and the nation about it. Gore, said one Democrat, "seemed eager to get things off his chest." Others put a more upbeat cast on the session, calling it a useful air-clearing that should allow the two men to move forward. "They had to cover a lot of territory," said one aide.

"My impression was it was a very constructive meeting. He felt it was a very good conversation," said one adviser to the former vice-president. Jake Siewert, a spokesman for Clinton, and Kiki McLean, a spokeswoman for Gore, both said their bosses would not comment on a private conversation. Gore and Clinton saw each other several times after the talk, and also spoke to his aides said these conversations were polite, but not consequential.

LOS ANGELES TIMES-
WASHINGTON POST NEWS SERVICE

THE TELEGRAPH

- 8 FEB 2001

Bush convenes first Cabinet meeting

Washington

19-112
PRESIDENT BUSH was convening his first Cabinet meeting, but with some conspicuous absences. His Attorney General and Trade Representative have not yet won Senate confirmation, and his Health Secretary was home in Wisconsin delivering his swan song as Governor.

Bush's tax cut proposals were at the top of Wednesday's agenda. He was meeting with 19 lawmakers on the House and Senate tax-writing committees, seeking support for his proposed 10-year, \$1.6 Trillion tax cut.

He was pitching the tax plan to wholesale distributors who were dropping by the White House office complex. And in a gathering with Roman Catholic charities, he was promoting his proposed tax breaks that would encourage charitable giving.

Later, he was sitting down with the Congressional Black Caucus. Blacks overwhelmingly favoured Bush's opponent, Al Gore, in the November election, and many remain distrustful of the new President. That suspicion deepened for some blacks when Bush nominated John Ashcroft as Attorney General. Ashcroft's record against affirmative action, hate-crimes laws and desegregation lawsuits has won Bush fresh criticism.

On Tuesday, the Senate Judiciary Committee narrowly sent Ashcroft's nomination to the full Senate, and Republicans were pressing for a Thursday vote.

Bush voiced frustration with the continuing opposition to Ashcroft from Democrats and from private groups critical of his



views. "There's been a lot of discussion, a lot of debate, a lot of questionnaires presented and answers filled out and it's time for the vote, it seems to me," Bush said on Tuesday.

With Ashcroft not yet installed at the Justice Department, Bush tapped a holdover from the Clinton administration, Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder, to substitute for Ashcroft at the first Cabinet meeting.

Likewise, Bush's pick for U.S. Trade Representative, Robert Zoellick, has yet to be confirmed by the Senate. He was questioned on Tuesday by members of the Senate Finance Committee, which pressed him on how he

would deal with trade disputes with the European Union, China and Canada. Bush asked Rita Hayes, the U.S. Ambassador to the World Trade Organisation in the Clinton administration, to sit in for Zoellick at Wednesday's meeting.

Tommy Thompson, Bush's pick to head the Department of Health and Human Services, was confirmed by the Senate a week ago. But Thompson chose to return to Wisconsin, where he still is Governor, to give a final state of the state address.

Thompson has made it clear that he found it emotionally difficult to leave Wisconsin.

Surgeon-General David Satcher was to sit in for Thompson.

Bush has not settled on the final composition of his Cabinet, administration officials said on Tuesday. The President elevated the U.S. Trade Representative and Environmental Protection Agency positions to Cabinet level, and may add others, they said.

AP

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

1 FEB 2001

A different kind of challenge

DIPLOMACY

K.P. NAYAR

Two events since the election of George W. Bush as the new president of the United States highlight both the opportunities and the pitfalls of dealing with the new set-up in Washington. First, about the opportunities. It was just as well that the first high level contact between the Bush administration and New Delhi was scheduled at the level of India's national security adviser, Brajesh Mishra, and the new US defence secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, at the 37th conference on security policy — a Davos-type world forum on security — in Wehrkunde near Munich.

Last week, Indian journalists in Washington were somewhat amused that the Pentagon spokesman who briefed reporters on the plans for a Mishra-Rumsfeld meeting in Wehrkunde could not get the Indian national security adviser's first name in the face of persistent queries by American reporters. What was not missed, though, was that the Pentagon found the meeting with Mishra important enough to be mentioned as a key event in Rumsfeld's itinerary in its pre-trip briefing.

Now the pitfalls. The first and only Indian minister to visit the US since the election of the new Republican president was the petroleum minister, Ram Naik. (Accompanying him was Santosh Gangwar, minister of state for petroleum and parliamentary affairs.) Good enough, since oil is now a powerful element in the new White House. President Bush is from Texas, the fountainhead of the US oil industry. His father, the former president, has longstanding oil connections in Texas and Dick Cheney, the vice-president and regent of the inexperienced new presidency, is an oil man of high standing.

Up until his election as Bush's running mate, Cheney was head of the oil giant, Halliburton. The talk of the town in the US capital is that the Texas fatcats are back in Washington. But Naik's problem was that all the fatcats were actually in Washington and none was in Texas when the Indian minister arrived in Houston on January 19. A day before the inauguration of the Texas governor as the 43rd US president, anyone in Texas who mattered and thousands of Texans who did not matter were all in Washington.

Indeed, the Indian embassy in the US had warned Naik's ministry that the minister's visit would be pointless since he wouldn't be able to meet anyone in Texas connected with the oil industry during the week when Bush was being sworn in as president. But who would listen in New Delhi's ministerial corridors to logic and common sense when there was the prospect of going on a foreign tour? So Naik came, did some sight-seeing and went back to India.

Notwithstanding the blossoming of India-US relations in the last one year, the change of guard at the White House is about to transform the nature of ties between New Delhi and Washington. In the afterglow of Bill Clinton's visit to India a year ago, Atal Bihari Vajpayee's ministers have been hopping in and out of the US: some of these visits, like that of the information

technology minister, Pramod Mahajan, have produced results. But as Naik's visit suggests, the camaraderie of the last year between India and the US is about to give way to a more businesslike relationship where sentiment and goodwill is to be replaced by give and take.

That is what makes the choice of the national security adviser as New Delhi's initial interlocutor to probe the new US administration very important. Mishra's foreign policy assessments and the Indian government's responses

and his foreign policy aides, they succeeded in changing the US's Kashmir policy which has been a thorn in India-US relations ever since independence. On the nuclear issue too, Washington's willingness to engage New Delhi in a non-proliferation dialogue made most other key countries follow suit in dealing with the Pokhran tests.

Quite unexpectedly, the Clinton administration also belatedly accepted the Indian position that Pakistan was largely responsible for the terror in Kashmir even though it stopped short of declar-

enced events was Clinton's belief that a trip to India was a missing link in the former president's life. Accounts by his wife, now senator, Hillary Clinton, of her two visits to India also influenced the president, for she was, in many ways, his secretary of state as well. India now has no such presidential goodwill to rely on in Bush, never mind the telephone conversation he had with Vajpayee a few days ago or his letter to the president, K.R. Narayanan. In fact, indications so far are that Bush is more comfortable leaving world affairs in the hands of his foreign policy team. After all, the overseas trips that Bush has made in his entire life can be counted on one's fingers.

The new president's foreign policy team believes that the US must retain its leadership role in the world, but unlike the Clinton administration, it will seek to do this without in-

curring any cost for the American people. To start with, the Bush administration is obsessed with threats to the US, as reflected in the new determination in Washington to build the national missile defence system — a variation of Ronald Reagan's strategic defence initiative — in complete insensitivity to Europe's reservations about the project and the outright opposition from China and Russia.

Secondly, the Bush White House envisages a peace in the world that is maintained on the US's behalf by others who are beholden to Washington. It would like the experience in East Timor — where Australians keep the peace — to be repeated elsewhere. In the Balkans, the Bush presidency is in favour of pulling out even the small number of US soldiers on the ground, leaving the peace-keeping to Europeans. In this context, it is interesting that the new secretary of state, Colin Powell, outlined a regional peace enforcement role for India in the Indian Ocean region when he testified before the senate foreign relations committee for his confirmation.

If at all Clinton demanded anything from India — as in the suggestion that New Delhi should take over the chairmanship of the Community of Democracies and whip "errant" democracies which were not to Washington's liking — the Vajpayee government was able to stand up and say "no" to Washington.

The demands from Bush, though, will not be on the comprehensive test ban treaty or human rights or democracy. When he makes them, they will be about US interests in Asia. And if India refuses those demands, then the US's relationship with India may not remain as cosy as it has been in the last one year. Washington is still full of people who have not lived down what they see as India's half-century-old intransigence towards the West. They still see India as a potential delinquent in their community of nations.

These influential men and women will not hesitate to stir up trouble in India-US relations. The challenge to Indian diplomacy is that these people will then be backed by countries which are not comfortable with the way India-US ties have evolved in the last year.



Oil is now a powerful element in the new White House. President Bush is from Texas, the fountainhead of the US oil industry

based on those assessments have so far stood the Vajpayee government in good stead on the external affairs front.

But in dealing with the new set-up in Washington, Mishra's tested diplomatic skills will be severely tried — a test that will eventually be as trying as the one that followed the Pokhran nuclear tests in May 1998. Of course, under a Bush dispensation, there will be less lecturing from Washington on issues like human rights, non-proliferation or labour standards. The new president has himself said: "One way for us to end up being viewed as the Ugly American is for us to go around the world saying 'We do it this way, so should you'."

But the price that countries like India will have to pay for any easing of pressure on hitherto contentious issues is the demand to be more and more sensitive to what the Bush White House perceives as the US's vital interests. In the flush of satisfaction over last year's India-US bonhomie, it is often forgotten in retrospect, that the relationship was, in some ways, a one way love affair.

Although Clinton's visit in March last year took the sting out of anti-Americanism in India, the Vajpayee government itself bargained hard to get what it wanted out of the US. To the credit of Va-

ing Islamabad as a state-sponsor of terrorism.

The catalyst in the emerging relationship came when Clinton summoned the former Pakistan prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, and virtually ordered him to pull Pakistan troops out of Kargil. But what is significant about all this is that the Clinton policy package that favoured India was delivered to the Vajpayee government without demanding anything significant in return from New Delhi.

It is not to be doubted that there were key people on the Capitol Hill and at all levels in the state department, in the national security council and elsewhere in the Clinton administration who were persuaded by the way India argued its case in Washington.

But an overriding factor that influ-

Ethical norms set for new team

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 21. The first day ended as impressively as it began for the new President of the United States, Mr. George W. Bush. From a private prayer service at St. John's Episcopal Church near Lafayette Park, Mr. Bush and Ms Laura Bush made their way through a number of glittering inaugural balls.

"I am looking forward to getting to work. There's a lot to be done, but before we start to work, there's some dancing to be done", remarked Mr. Bush at the Texas-Wyoming ball. But the Republican President did get some work done on his first day.

In one of his first acts as the Chief Executive, Mr. Bush formally presented to the Senate his list of nominees for Cabinet posts; and the Senate quickly responded by confirming by voice vote seven Cabinet members, including the Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, the De-

fence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld and the Secretary of Treasury, Mr. Paul O'Neill.

The remaining members of the administration are expected to be confirmed by the Senate by the end of next week, but some of the nominees are not going to be approved all that easily. Several Democrats have said that they would oppose the appointments of Mr. John Ashcroft for the post of Attorney General and Ms Gale Norton as Interior Secretary. Mr. Ashcroft went through a bruising hearings process at the Senate last week; and Democrats have told Mr. Bush that if he was really talking about healing the wounds then he should have come up with some other name for the nation's top law enforcement officer.

Clinton's orders halted

Mr. Bush, on Saturday, also signed an executive order establishing ethical standards for his new administration and also set in motion

a process to halt the flurry of executive orders and rules, including pardons, that came about in the last days of the Clinton presidency. Mr. Bush, for instance, is focussed on the last minute instructions given on Medicare guidelines and environmental protections.

The review by the new President of the last actions of his predecessor is nothing new. It has become almost a routine event. In the realm of non-administrative and non-political orders, the Bush administration will also be reviewing in detail some of the pardons issued by Mr. Bill Clinton.

For example, at the eleventh hour, Mr. Clinton pardoned 140 Americans including former Whitewater associate, Ms Susan McDougal, the former Director of the Central Intelligence, Mr. John Deutsch who has been accused of mishandling national secrets and Ms Patty Hearst. Mr. Clinton also pardoned his half brother, Mr. Roger Smith, who spent time in jail in the 1980's on drug charges.

If in his inaugural address, Mr. Bush pledged to work for "a single nation of justice and opportunity", he picked up the theme of bipartisanship during his luncheon address to law makers. "People say, well gosh, the election was so close, nothing will happen except for finger pointing and name calling and bitterness. I am here to tell the country that things will get done, that we're going to rise above expectations, that both Republicans and Democrats will come together to do what's right for America".

Mr. Bush's emphasis on working together and unity as opposed to partisan divisiveness has to be seen in the context of the political environment in Washington D.C. He has come to office after the closest race in the last 125 years; he won 30 States, but lost the popular vote by more than 500,000 votes and won the Electoral College by 271-267 votes, or one more than the majority required.

On Capitol Hill, for the first time since 1881, the Senate is evenly split between the Republicans and the Democrats with the Vice-President, Mr. Richard Cheney's tie-breaking vote giving the Grand Old Party the "majority" status. In the House of Representatives, the Republicans have a slim five-seat advantage. While the GOP is currently basking in the limelight of having the White House and both Chambers on Capitol Hill, the Democrats are gearing up for the off-year elections of 2002.



Moving quickly to get the Republican administration up and running, the Senate on Saturday approved (from left) Gen. Colin Powell to head the State Department, the retired industrialist, Mr. Paul O'Neill, for the Treasury post, Mr. Roderick Paige as Education Secretary, Ms. Ann Veneman as Agriculture Secretary, the former Pentagon chief, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, for a second term as Defence Secretary, Mr. Spencer Abraham as Energy Secretary and Mr. Don Evans as Commerce Secretary.— Reuters

THE NEWS

22 JAN 2001

TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2001

MR. BUSH'S 'BALANCE OF POWER'

THE NEW U.S. President, Mr. George Walker Bush, is known to face a somewhat unusual challenge of having to contend with a bipartisan balance of power in the Senate. The chamber, which rapidly confirmed some of his non-controversial Cabinet appointments, is equally divided between his Republican Party and the Democrats, save for the Vice-President in his constitutional position as the presiding functionary. Moreover, given the unique controversies about the arguably incomplete popular vote-counting that marked Mr. Bush's otherwise-indisputable ascension as the 43rd President, his immediate domestic political task is to unite the divided American citizens. The delicacy of his interactions with the Senate during his tenure will therefore be particularly critical in this respect. Yet, when Mr. Bush in his Inaugural Address chose to commit the new administration to "shaping" a global "balance of power that favours freedom", he clearly sought to cast his net wide on the foreign policy front as well. His immediate predecessor, Mr. Bill Clinton, has left the White House at the end of his optimal two terms as a remarkably astute practitioner of international diplomacy. To this extent, Mr. Bush may find it necessary to traverse the proverbial extra mile to preserve and promote the "authority" that the U.S. seems to have acquired on the international stage in recent years. As the first U.S. President in the present unsettled era of globalisation and other post-Cold War cross-currents, Mr. Clinton certainly succeeded in re-inventing America's "engagement" with the international community in several momentous ways. Some of the more important aspects of Mr. Clinton's foreign policy legacy pertain to his actions which somewhat helped a post-Soviet Russia stabilise itself as an international player. He clearly drew China to the global centre stage for the debates on a range of issues including trade as also the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles that could deliver them.

Mr. Bush has spelt out a virtual foreign policy agenda of freedom within the broad spectrum of Washington's prevailing "engagement by history and by choice". Although there is a definitive distinction between freedom and democracy, a logical issue in this context is whether Mr. Bush will sustain and also enhance Mr. Clinton's decisive engagement with India that could be traced to its status as the largest democracy and a liberalising economy. The answer will lie in the substantive manner in which Mr. Bush eventually seeks to craft a "balance of power" architecture that would also help "defend our (U.S.) allies and interests". Closely related to his prospective world view is his pledge to "build" the U.S. "defences beyond challenge" and to "confront weapons of mass destruction". If these stated goals are to be striven for, Mr. Bush may have already signalled his readiness to envision and also establish a national missile defence system (with or without a new nomenclature). Given the sensitivity of this theme in Europe and Asia, New Delhi's equation with Mr. Bush will be partially determined on this count.

The Clinton presidency, while being almost epochal in its foreign policy reach especially in the later years, was no less salient for the manner in which the gigantic U.S. economy was put on a path of unprecedented prosperity at the macro level. However, some major social issues of equity still remain, accentuated in some ways by the political arguments of the recent presidential poll itself. Not surprisingly, Mr. Bush has now sought to go beyond his campaign rhetoric of "compassionate conservatism". Added to "compassion" are the other presidential themes of civility, courage and character as an intended check-list of guiding principles. A nodding acquaintance with Mr. Clinton's presidency, which was punctuated by an impeachment and a subsequent acquittal, will suffice to recognise that Mr. Bush has expressed a desire to restore the perceived aura of the White House in every respect.

THE HINDU

23 JAN 2001

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119-16

Change of Minister may hit Ulster peace moves

By Hasan Suroor 24/1

LONDON, JAN. 25. The exit of Mr. Peter Mandelson has triggered speculation over its impact on the Northern Ireland peace process which, as Secretary of State for the province, he did much to sustain and even his critics concede that this was one job which he pursued with some dedication, even if occasionally he ruffled feathers, particularly those of the Republicans.

Though his successor, Dr. John Reid, is highly regarded for his political skills, there is a view that someone with more "hands-on" experience of Northern Ireland was needed at this crucial stage in the peace process. The Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair singled out Mr. Mandelson's "achievement" in Northern Ireland to pay tribute to him in the Commons on Wednesday saying he doubted if the peace efforts would have been "sustained so well, except with his commitment." Mr. Mandelson, he said, had made an "enormous" contribution to keep up the momentum.

Incidentally, Mr. Mandelson's last job as the outgoing Minister on Wednesday was to answer questions in the Commons on Northern Ireland and though the tension of listening to a Minister in his dying political moments was palpable, he was heard in silence. In Belfast, the sense was that the attempts to push forward the Good Friday Agreement would certainly lose some of its tempo with Mr. Mandelson's departure which has come at a time when the situation is in a flux with the moderates on both sides under pressure.

Mr. Mandelson had been trying hard over the past few weeks to get things moving. The Sinn Fein President, Mr. Gerry Adams with whom he had a running battle, especially over police reforms, acknowledged indirectly the importance of Mr. Mandelson saying he hoped the British Government would not be "distracted" by the fallout of his resignation. "This is a defining period and we need a very focussed commitment by Tony Blair," he said. Some of his col-



John Reid

leagues, however, were scathing, calling Mr. Mandelson "arrogant" and a good riddance.

The Unionists, with whom he had come to be identified closely, were deeply disappointed and the Unionist chief and First Minister of Northern Ireland, Mr. David Trimble was reported to be particularly sad. Mr. Mandelson had gone the extra mile to support Mr. Trimble as the principal moderate voice among the Unionists, and often this annoyed the Sinn Fein which thought that he was taking sides. While his predecessor Ms. Mo Mowlam, from whom he took over in October 1999, was seen as pro-Republicans, he came to be perceived as being partial to the Unionists though the more detached observers point out that in their own ways the two were simply trying to achieve the same end: peace.

The battle begins at home

THE RITUALS and the hoopla out of the way; the 43rd President of the United States, Mr. George W. Bush, is settling down at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue and trying to find out what Washington D.C. is all about. For one who has expressed disdain for all that the city stands for — politically that is — the Republican will soon find out that it is not about to change its old ways, even if the first impression from Capitol Hill is one of bipartisan warmth and friendship.

There is a very long way to go for the new President; and Mr. Bush is not even pretending now that he has mastered, or will be able to get by in, the ways of the capital city in the next four years. And for a Republican President coming to office after a gap of eight years, he knows full well that the realm of domestic politics cuts at least two ways — ideology and in-hand.

The bottomline for the next four years is that there is going to be a

premium on domestic politics and policies, but not necessarily at the expense of foreign policy. The divisive election was fought on domestic issues and on the differences between Mr. Bush and Mr. Al Gore on things that are quite dear to the American people. And in the election of 2004, the incumbent — assuming that he is in the fray — will be judged for the most part on the goods delivered on the home front.

Mr. Bush appears to have started

Acrimony still

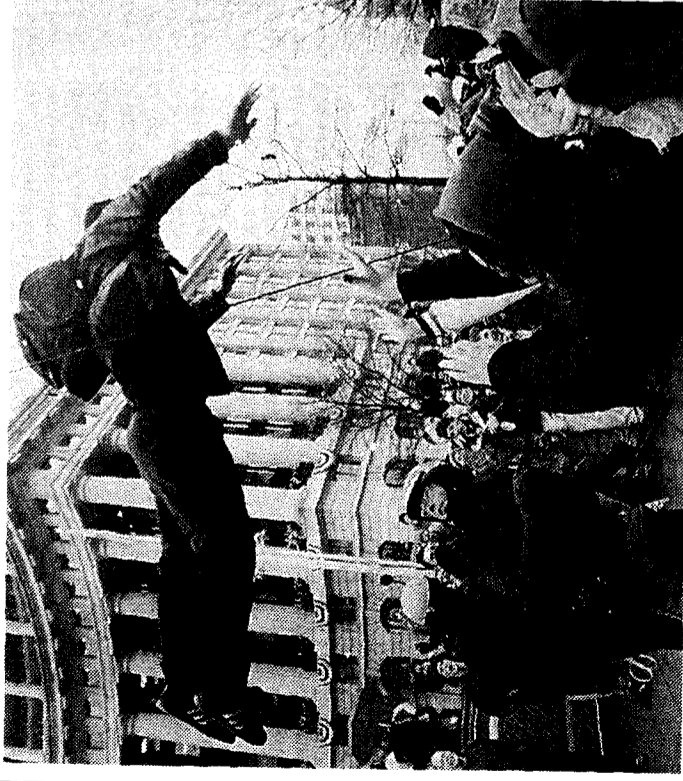
A REPUBLICAN President is expected to pick Cabinet nominees with conservative credentials, but Mr. George W. Bush should still have known better. Or did he knowingly choose Mr. John Ashcroft, darling of the religious Right but a red rag to the liberals?

No one is picking on Mr. Ashcroft just because he does not smoke, drink or dance. Rather he is being hauled over the coals for his so-called extremist views that people say will make him less than suitable for the Attorney-General's job. Listening to people on the Right will give the impression that Mr. Ashcroft is the best thing that ever happened to America.

And the left-leaning liberals and the so-called mainstreamers will

make it appear as though Mr. Ashcroft is a hick and a red-neck who will start passing guns to religious zealots and white supremacists to take aim at abortion clinics the first day he gets into office. But the truth of the matter is that no will really know what goes on "inside" Mr. Ashcroft's mind and the only things to go by are his stated views on such issues as abortion, gun control, and affirmative action. Even Mr. Ronnie White, whose move to the Federal Bench was actively opposed by Mr. Ashcroft, has taken the position that he will not label the former Republican Senator a racist, but rather as someone who distorted the African-American Judge's track record.

The liberals are incensed with



A protestor makes his point during Mr. George W. Bush's Inaugural parade in Washington.

The liberals are incensed with Mr. George Bush for choosing Mr. John Ashcroft as Attorney-General despite all the talk of healing wounds after a divisive election.

But there seems to be a message to the religious fundamentalists of the GOP as well. Very early on in the political game in Washington, Mr. Bush appears to be telling the right wingers and those extremists sitting on the fringes that Mr. Ashcroft is all they will be getting, from a personnel and from a policy point of view. — S.K.

of in the right direction with something that he has always been known for in Texas — reaching out to the "other side". Mr. Bush knows only too well that if he is going to push his Conservative economic and political agenda, he will have to find grounds of accommodation with left-of-centre Democrats many of whom are still miffed that the White House went to the Republicans as a result of a technical decision by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The success of Mr. Bush over the next four years will depend on how much of the positive and the practical of Mr. Ronald Reagan and Mr. Bill Clinton he is willing to emulate. One of the strengths of the Reagan Presidency was his ability to bring Democrats on board right from the start of his tenure in 1981; and Mr. Clinton's best part was in taking on the Republicans in their own backyard and in many times frustrating the Grand Old Party by taking up its own agenda.

Mr. Bush's conservative agenda goes much further than the \$ 1.6 trillion ten-year tax cut proposal. It includes such issues as education, social security, medicare and prescription drugs, to mention a few. And then with Republicans such as the Senator, Mr. John McCain, constantly breathing down his neck, the issue of campaign finance reform is also significant.

It is not without good reason that Mr. Bush has chosen to focus on education and tax cuts as his first major tests in Washington D.C. and on Capitol Hill. Education has always been at the heart of the Bush campaign even if his track record in Texas has been derided by the Democrats; and the issue strikes at the heart of the conservatives' philosophy of getting a critical component of the family and the system back firmly in the hands of local authorities.

"No Child Left Behind" — that is the essence of Mr. Bush's education plan. The main principle being that the federal role in education is not to serve the system, but the children. Through a mixture of rewards and punishments, the proposal calls for more accountability with a focus on achieving what will work, including teacher improvement and reducing the involvement of the federal bureaucracy.

The \$ 47-billion plan had its first teething troubles when Democrats lashed out at the idea of issuing 'vouchers' or funds to parents to move their kids out of non-performing public schools into private schools. Democrats argue that there is not only an element of elitism in this concept but that it will cause real trouble to the public school system in the United States. After initially hanging tough on

'vouchers', the Bush administration has given signs that it is willing to back off a little.

And as far as tax cuts are concerned, that was only to be expected. With all the noise being made about the economy, getting into recession mode, the Republicans are hopeful that the Democrats will also sign on to a proposal that has again been criticised as being too favourable to the rich. Democrats argue that for any tax cut plan to be even considered the national debt must be paid down; making sure there is money for prescription drugs, education and expanding health care.

Democrats such as Mr. Richard Gephardt, Minority Leader in the House of Representatives, have argued that the first step of the new administration would be to reach an overall accord with Congress on the Budget with a view to seeing where the room is for tax cuts.

Mr. Bush has a two-fold challenge in coming to terms with his agenda

Under the Bush administration, there is going to be a premium on domestic policies, but not necessarily at the expense of foreign policy, says SRIDHAR KRISHNASWAMI.

— he must reach out to both the political Left and the Right; and in many ways dealing with the Democrats is not going to be as big as dealing with his own folks sitting on the extreme fringes. For now, the temptation has been to look at lawmakers such as Mr. Zell Miller, Senator from Georgia, and claim that Democrats have come on board. But there is a long way to go for the week-old Presidency.

And there is yet another challenge for Mr. Bush, over the next four years. After eight successful years, Mr. Clinton may no longer be occupying the White House, but he is very much around. Ex-Presidents are supposed to turn into the "Wise Old" category, fade away and show up only on specified occasions. But not Mr. Clinton.

At 54, he is a few weeks younger than Mr. Bush, politically as smart as he was and the Democratic Party will still lean on him, not just for valuable campaign advice but for all that money he rakes in. The "bad" news for Mr. Bush is not just the Clintons — Ms. Hillary Rodham Clinton is a Senator now — in Washington D.C. or New York, but also that his November tormentor, the former Vice-President, Mr. Gore, is just a few miles away in Virginia.



Bush prefers a US missile defence system to nukes

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, JAN 28



PRESIDENT

Bush has reaffirmed plans to reduce the size of America's nuclear arsenal while also deploying a missile defence system capable of protecting the United States and its allies.

Bush at the White House said on Friday, provided no details but recalled his pledges on those subjects during the presidential campaign: "I'm going to fulfill that campaign promise."

He emphasized the impor-

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tance of reducing US nuclear forces, "commensurate with our ability to keep the peace."

"My point is, I want America to lead the world toward a more safe world when it comes to nuclear weaponry," he said. "On the offensive side we can do so, and we can do so on the defensive side as well."

At the Pentagon, Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said that although it was too early to discuss details of a national missile defence development, "the President has not been ambivalent about this. He intends to deploy a missile defense capability for the country."

The Clinton administration pursued development of such a system to protect all 50 states, but President Clinton decided last

summer that the technology was not mature enough to make a commitment to deploy it. Clinton also said more time was needed to address the objections of Russia and China and the misgivings of many of America's European allies.

During the campaign, Bush pledged to make missile defence a top priority and deploy it even if it meant abandoning the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty with the former Soviet Union that prohibits nationwide missile defences.

Secretary of State Colin Powell told Senators at his confirmation hearing on Jan. 17 that the administration would waste no time developing a deployment plan "while looking at the diplomatic ramifications."

INDIAN EXPRESS

29 JAN 2001

It's President Bush now



George W. Bush being sworn in as the world's most powerful man. Photo: AFP

S. Rajagopalan
Washington, January 20

GEORGE WALKER Bush was today sworn in as the 43rd President of the United States on a cold, rainy, windswept day with the promise of snow and sleet to follow. The hostile weather was, at once, a grim reminder of a turbulent election that delayed the final outcome by over a month.

No longer the President-elect, Mr Bush vowed to apply the balm and unite a deeply divided polity. His brief inaugural address highlighted the greatness of America and advanced the "one nation" theme by dwelling on "things that bind us together".

The address set out Mr Bush's commitment to "fulfil the promise of our nation through civility, courage, compassion and character". Said Mr Bush: "I will live and lead by these principles: to advance my convictions with civility; to pursue the public interest with courage; to speak for greater justice and compassion; to call for responsibility, and try to live it as well."

"What you do is as important as anything government does. I ask you to seek a common good beyond your comfort; to defend needed reforms against easy attacks; to serve your nation, beginning with your neighbour. I ask you to be citizens. Citizens, not spectators. Citizens, not subjects. Responsible citizens, building communities of service and a nation of character," he said.

On the international plane, Bush said the US will lead the cause of freedom. "The US will show purpose, not arrogance. We will speak with values." Only the second President in the US history to follow a father into the White House, Bush was administered the oath by Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist on the Capitol Hill.

Watched by a large and distinguished audience that included his father, Bush placed his hand on the same Bible his father had used in 1989 as he took the 35-word oath. Bush Sr hugged his son and wiped a tear of joy. Then it was Bush Jr's turn to wipe his own tear of joy.

Ahead of Bush, Vice-President-elect Dick Cheney was administered the oath, after an invocation by the Rev. Franklin Graham and a musical selection by a school choir.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

21 JAN 2001

Bush sworn in 43rd U.S. President

WASHINGTON, JAN. 20. Mr. George Walker Bush was inaugurated 43rd President of the United States on Saturday, his eyes glistening with emotion as he became only the second son in American history to follow his father to the White House. At a cold, drizzly noon (17.00 GMT), Mr. Bush raised his right hand and swore the oath of the office and promised to bring "civility, courage, compassion and character" to the White House.

In the pageantry of the transfer of power, Mr. George Herbert Walker Bush brushed back a tear as he stood proud witness to his son's inauguration 12 years after his own. He was the first father of an incoming President to see his son take office in 40 years, since Joseph P. Kennedy watched John F. Kennedy inaugurated.

The Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist administered the oath of office, first to the Vice-President, Mr. Dick Cheney, then to Mr. Bush, whose hairbreadth election was cemented by a Supreme Court decision five weeks after the ballots were cast. His wife, Laura, and 19-year-old twin daughters, Jenna and Barbara, stood with him as he took the oath, hand on the same historic Bible his father used in 1989. The new President embraced them, shook hands with Mr. Clinton and Mr. Al Gore, the Democrat he defeated in the overtime election, and then turned to his parents.

First a handshake with his father, then a brief embrace. The new President stepped to the microphone the flag-draped West Front of the Capitol building, presented for the first time as "The President of the United States, George W. Bush." So ended the eight years of Mr. Clinton, who had declared that he would work until his last minute in power, and did, with a sheaf of more than 100 presidential pardons just before he left the White House.

Mr. Bush set his themes in a 15-minute address that offered a salute to Mr. Gore for "a contest conducted with spirit and ended



Mr. George W. Bush being sworn in the President of the United States on Saturday by the U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice, Mr. William Rehnquist (foreground). Also seen are his wife, Ms. Laura Bush and daughter, Ms. Jenna Bush.

— Reuters

with grace." The applause was muffled, from gloved hands, 14 rounds, most subdued, one with cheers when Mr. Bush promised to pursue the tax cut on which he campaigned. He said he would not accept nor allow a situation in which "our differences run so deep it seems we share a continent but not a country."

There was a hint of later snow in the air and in the weather forecast as Mr. Clinton and Mr. Bush shared a limousine from the White House to the Capitol for the inauguration of the Republican

whom the outgoing President campaigned to defeat. Mr. Bush said unity was the work of leaders, and "this is my solemn pledge: I will work to build a single nation of justice and opportunity."

In his inaugural address, Mr. Bush promised to "live and lead" by firm principles: "To advance my convictions with civility, to pursue the public interest with courage, to speak for greater justice and compassion, to call for responsibility, and try to live it as well." — AP

See also Page 11

THE HINDU

21 JAN 2001

Main challenge for Bush will be foreign policy

WASHINGTON, JAN. 20. Every President assumes office believing he can set the foreign policy agenda for his administration, only to discover that a major portion has already been set by the world.

The crises of the world do not take a time-out for a new American leader. Mr. Bill Clinton arrived hoping to focus on domestic issues, but was immediately faced by crises in places such as Somalia, Haiti and Taiwan, along with hardy perennials like Russia and West Asia.

Mr. George W. Bush, was confronted by the killing of the President of Congo this week, and might see the election of a hawkish Prime Minister in Israel and the crumbling of the peace accord in Northern Ireland in his first month in office. Further down the line, his enthusiasm for a missile-defence system is certain to generate fierce opposition in Europe and Russia.

E.U. rapid reaction force

During the campaign, Mr. Bush and his top national security aide, Ms. Condoleezza Rice, said European allies should carry more of the military burden on their continent. As President, Mr. Bush may find they are doing more than he would like.

The European Union is planning a rapid-reaction force of 60,000 troops for peacekeeping missions and crises in Europe and perhaps elsewhere that is to be ready by 2003. The Clinton administration has said the plans are

fine as long as the U.S.-led North Atlantic alliance retains the primary role for security in Europe. To ensure that, the U.S. has proposed that NATO do the planning for the nascent force.

National missile defence

If Mr. Bush makes good on his pledge to unfurl a missile-defence umbrella over the U.S., Washington and Moscow would be entering an era of profound disagreement about how to maintain global security against the use of nuclear weapons, even as they continue to work to reduce their number.

The prospect of missile defence threatens to drag the one-time superpower rivals, as well as China, India and Pakistan, into a new arms race, experts say.

Russia and China are alarmed that a new U.S. "shield" might undermine deterrence — that concept of strategic stability that comes from knowing that the terrible cost of using nuclear weapons is the certainty of retaliation.

China, a rival?

During the campaign, Mr. Bush suggested he would treat China more like a rival and give stronger support to Taiwan. He will have to define what this means, most immediately in responding to Taiwan's requests to buy submarines and advanced naval destroyers.

China says it would view such sales as a major build-up and a grave intrusion into its internal affairs, but it is also building up its

missile forces off Taiwan and upgrading its own naval and air power.

Mr. Bush's challenge is to bolster Taiwan's defences while still encouraging Taiwan and Beijing to negotiate about the future status of the island, which Beijing considers an inalienable part of "one China". China expects to enter the World Trade Organisation this year and will start opening its markets, a longtime goal of U.S. officials who say capitalism will eventually help make China more free.

Kashmir issue

Mr. Bush can expect a roller-coaster ride through the beautiful Himalayan region of Kashmir which sits to the north of both India and Pakistan, resting like one jewelled crown on two inseparable heads.

For a half-century, both nations have claimed this land as their own, and they have fought each other repeatedly to prove their seriousness. Nuclear weapons are now part of the picture, prompting Mr. Clinton to call the region "the most dangerous place in the world."

Mr. Bush will be tempted time and again to play peacemaker. India and Pakistan are in a nuclear arms race, but with both being impoverished nations and new to the competition, the race is more of a mosey than a sprint. The U.S. will require great effort to merely slow the development of bigger bombs, and missiles of greater endurance. — *New York Times*

THE HINDU

21 JAN 2001

Oil's all that's needed to light Bush fire

Indrani Bagchi

NEW DELHI 19 JANUARY

IT WAS humour columnist Dave Barry who hit the nail on the head. Commenting on the new Bush administration, which is readying for its inauguration on Saturday, Mr Barry remarked sarcastically that Mr Bush seemed to have taken all sections of opinion into consideration — of the oil industry in Texas. Beneath the humour is a more serious observation: The top brass of the new team at the White House are more clued into the Old Economy than the New, and even there, intimate mainly with the global energy industry.

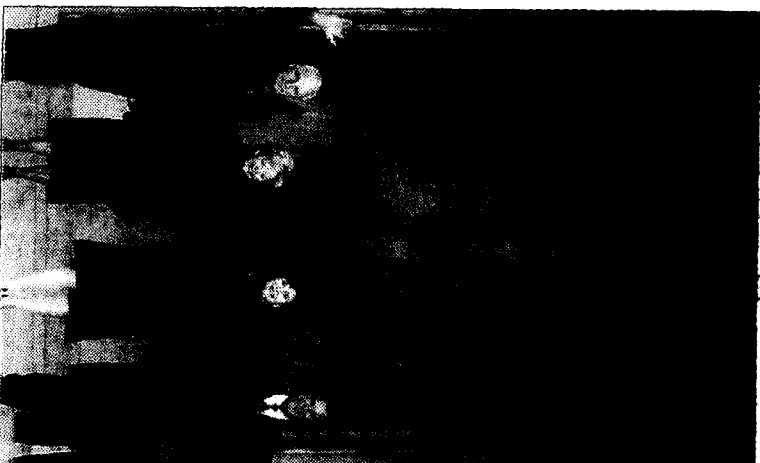
For President-elect George W Bush, from his failing oil enterprises to presidential campaign, his life's ventures have been nurtured and funded by oil industry giants, Enron emerging as the largest contributor to his presidency.

Therefore, it's no surprise that the top two of the company, Kenneth Lay and Joseph Skilling, contributed \$100,000 each to his campaign and Mr Lay is a member of Bush's transition committee.

Therefore, while Enron will continue to advance its presence in countries like India, it is also clear that they will have the top gun of the US government protecting their interests. This is, after all, the man who relaxed environment polluting norms in Texas so Enron's plants were spared from having to install costly equipment.

If nothing else, the Maharashtra government needs to take deep note of this fact as they battle the energy major in its backyard.

Vice-president Dick Cheney, and many suspect, the heartbeat of the throne, was until recently CEO of energy company



HORSE-ROUND: US President-elect George W. Bush (right) with wife Laura and vice-president elect Dick Cheney with wife Lynne being introduced at the Presidential Inaugural Opening Celebration in Washington on Thursday. — AP

Halliburton, retiring with a \$20 million package, which turned out to be an election issue in the US.

But his election has added sunshine to the lives of the energy industry seeking new

producers in Central Asia, (Mr Cheney is one of the dozen members of Kazakhstan's oil advisory board) western and southern Africa and new markets in China, India and Brazil. New national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, who was on the board of the energy super major Chevron, has the added distinction of having an oil tanker named after her. Commerce secretary Don Evans was until recently the head of Tom Brown, an oil drilling firm. Interior secretary Gale Norton, is more concerned about oil drilling in the Arctic wildlife preserves than in protecting wildlife.

New energy secretary Spencer Abraham is well known in India as the man who co-sponsored Congressional legislation, raising the H1-B visa cap from 65,000 to 115,000. Yet this losing candidate this time was funded more by the energy industry (\$211,741) than the IT giants, who must have benefited by the flood of foreign tech skills.

New attorney general John Ashcroft, who had also lost to his dead rival's widow in Missouri, found his campaign richer by roughly \$142,399 by the energy industry.

According to independent campaign finance trackers like Center for Responsive Politics, in the election cycle 1999-2000, oil and gas companies contributed \$27.7 million — Enron being the single-largest contributor with \$113,800, with BP, Amoco, Exxon Mobil following close behind.

A whopping 78 per cent of oil and gas money went to Republicans, 21 per cent to Democrats — the list of names a virtual who's who of the industry — from Conoco, Reliant, Kindermorgan, Occidental, et al. What does this mean for India? Plenty,

if the government's new emphasis on energy security is anything to go by.

It is believed that external affairs minister Jaswant Singh held a meeting of top external affairs officials recently to discuss the issue of energy security as a foreign policy imperative for India. This has taken on a different dimension after the unprecedented oil price hikes of last year, which sent India's fiscal deficit figures into a tailspin. Since India needs to maintain a steady rate of growth to emerge as a legitimate power in this century, it also needs to secure its sources of energy. It was also a principal reason for a bargain deal with Iraq to purchase oil for wheat, last November.

India is one of the largest emerging markets for energy consumption and this is bound to influence the way foreign policy issues are played out here. It is a clear impetus for Jaswant Singh's forthcoming visit to Saudi Arabia, which is the largest supplier of petroleum to India and, MEA officials said, "a natural ally" for India in the energy sector.

India's emphasis on energy as a foreign policy issue is therefore bound to find a responsive echo in the new US administration. Not only will there be convergence with the US on a policy to Central Asian countries as a developing source of oil and gas, but also find facilitation in the matter of setting up pipelines to deliver energy from the producers to the consumers.

Dick Cheney's former company, Halliburton, executed the Yadana pipeline from Myanmar to Thailand. It's a step away to carrying Myanmar gas to India, Bangladeshi gas to India or even Iranian gas to India.

Clinton leaves, but shadow to remain

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Jan. 19: America is to have a shadow President for the first time in its 225-year history.

Friends and foes of Bill Clinton, who will become ex-President at noon tomorrow, are unanimous that as the youngest President — since Theodore Roosevelt, 50, in 1909 — to retire at the age of 54, he will not fade into oblivion.

Clinton's foes are hoping that he will leave his successor, George W. Bush alone. Says Ari Fleischer, who is to be the new White House press secretary: "There is an ongoing tradition of leaving office with a note of grace and respect, and I expect President Clinton will honour it".

But Fleischer's hopes may be misplaced once Clinton settles down in his post-White House role. Already, Clinton has "captured" the Democratic party by foisting his best friend and chief fund-raiser Terence McAuliffe as the next chairman of the Democratic National Committee (DNC).

The vote for the DNC chairmanship is due only in February, but 300 of the committee's 450 members have pledged support to McAuliffe, whose campaign is being spearheaded by the outgoing party chief, Joe Andrew.

Logically, Al Gore, who lost

the presidency to Bush, should be the leader of the Democratic party. But Gore's own former campaign manager, Tony Coelho, is on record as saying: "Bill Clinton is the incumbent President and the so-called last winner, so he is the de facto leader. He will be the one that the party will depend on to raise money and to be the major voice in whatever they are doing across the country."

Indeed, Gore's role in the party may turn out to be less effective than that of Hillary Clinton, the outgoing First Lady and new Senator from New York.

Republicans suspect that Clinton is carefully plotting all this, so that he can return to the White House in a few years as the spouse of the first woman President of the US. Last night, as the President-elect's inaugural festivities began here with a concert by Ricky Martin and spectacular fireworks, Clinton stole the limelight with a nationally televised farewell speech.

There is no tradition in the US of farewell speeches by outgoing Presidents: Ronald Reagan gave such a speech, but 10 days before the swearing-in of his successor.

What makes Clinton different from all his predecessors is that when he leaves the White House at noon tomorrow, he will end his

term in office with the highest job rating for any retiring US President: he also leaves behind the most prosperous nation on earth with the longest period of economic growth for any presidency.

Implicitly, Clinton warned Bush in his farewell speech not to tinker with the economy with a proposed \$1.6-trillion tax cut for the rich, cautioned against isolationism in international relations and pleaded for racial harmony in view of the alienation of Blacks during the November election, when many of them were prevented from voting.

Last week, Clinton practically questioned the legitimacy of his successor by saying that the only way the Republicans could win the election was by stopping the vote count in Florida after Gore had won the popular mandate.

Clinton has bought a house in Washington for \$2.87 million: he will be the only President since Woodrow Wilson to own a house in the capital after retirement.

He has also bought a house in Chappaqua, New York, for \$1.7 million. The state will fund an office for him in Manhattan. With such a network, enduring charisma and the support of a powerful Senator from New York, Clinton will be in the limelight as shadow President for four years.

THE TELEGRAPH

20 JAN 2001

Bush strides in, adieu Clinton

DESIKAN THIRUNARAYANAPURAM
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Jan. 19. — With a performance by pop star Ricky Martin at the hallowed Lincoln Memorial and fireworks on a rainy day, President-elect Mr. George W. Bush rode into Washington. Outgoing President, Mr. Bill Clinton said goodbye to America after a reign marked by prosperity and scandal.

The Republicans' four-day inauguration party kicked off on Thursday evening with a whirl of parties, celebrations and private dinners around the nation's capital. Mr. Bush descended the steps of the Lincoln Memorial yesterday afternoon to the strains of Aaron Copland's 'Appalachian Spring'.

This was the first major event leading to his swearing in tomorrow as the 43rd President of the USA.

Mr. Bush watched a performance that included an eclectic mix, from Ricky Martin to Andrew Lloyd Webber. The moment must have been partic-

CLINTON STATEMENT

WASHINGTON, Jan. 19. — Mr. Bill Clinton has reached a deal with prosecutors to avoid an indictment, requiring him to acknowledge that he may have made misleading statements in the Lewinsky case and to agree to a suspension of his law licence, US government sources said. — AP

ularly sweet to Mr. Bush because eight years ago, Mr. Bill Clinton celebrated on the same steps after taking over reigns of the White House from his father.

The organizers of the kickoff party were expecting around 200,000 people to descend on Washington's National Mall. However, a combination of factors including unpleasant weather, early dismissal of government workers to avoid traffic snarls and heavy security kept the audience for the inaugural concert, small and subdued. Mr. Bush spent his first day

making speeches and giving interviews. The common thread of all his statements was that he had won the election fair and square. He was willing to work with the Democratic Opposition, but would not "back off" from his conservative agenda spelled out during the campaign.

At a Republican National Committee meeting, Mr. Bush said: "I want all citizens to hear loud and clear that I'm going to be everybody's President." So busy was the President-elect with the festivities that aides said he had no time to watch Mr. Clinton's farewell speech.

Mr. Clinton, in an uncharacteristically brief farewell address said he was leaving the country more prosperous than when he took over.

"My days in this office are nearly through, but my days of service, I hope, are not," he said. "In the years ahead, I will never hold a position higher or a covenant more sacred than that of the President of USA. But there is no title I will wear more proudly than that of a citizen."



From right: President-elect Mr. George W. Bush, his wife Mrs. Laura Bush, Mrs. Lynne Cheney and the Vice President-elect Mr. Dick Cheney, wave during the Presidential Inaugural Opening Celebration at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington on Thursday. — AP/PTI

National missile defence: A hot issue for Bush

WASHINGTON: George W. Bush is determined to deploy a missile defence system to protect the U.S., but he must overcome technical and financial constraints and the opposition of European allies, Russia and China.

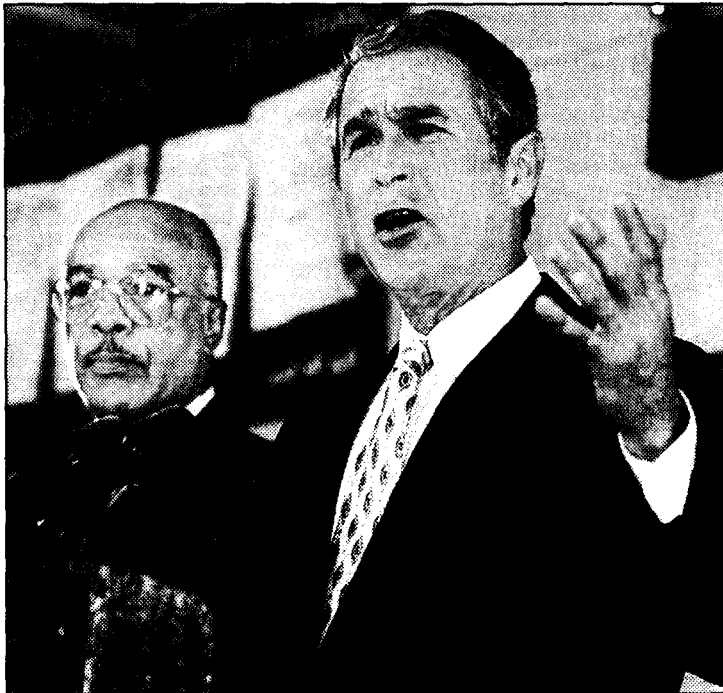
Outgoing President Bill Clinton hesitated, leaving to his successor the decision whether or not to deploy a National Missile Defence (NMD) system. Unlike Ronald Reagan's more ambitious 'Star Wars' project, the missile shield currently under development is limited in scope: it would intercept only a handful of missiles fired at U.S. territory by rogue states like North Korea, Iraq or Iran.

Mr Clinton, who judged the threat to be "real and growing" said he did not have enough confidence in the system's reliability to give the go ahead: only one of the first three intercept attempts succeeded. But since his campaign for the presidency, Mr Bush has promised not only to go forward, but to deploy an expanded system capable of covering Europe and Israel as well as the U.S. against a missile attack.

Donald Rumsfeld, his tough but pragmatic new Defence Secretary, has defended NMD while showing some flexibility. "There's no question but that I think that we should deploy a missile defence system when it's technologically possible and effective," he said last week at his Senate confirmation hearing. The Pentagon says construction of an NMD radar on Shemya Island in Alaska must be approved by March if the land-based system currently under development is to be ready for deployment by 2005. It seems unlikely Mr Bush will be ready to approve deployment by then. Mr Rumsfeld suggested the new administration would opt for a limited system for its deterrent value, and then expand the system later.

"And I think you, obviously, would want to be in discussions with Russia about the sizes and shapes of their capabilities and ours," he told the Senators.

Russia is firmly opposed to deployment, which would violate the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty.



REMEMBERING MARTYR: President-elect George W. Bush speaks to students at the Kelso Elementary School in Houston on Monday, recalling the teachings of Martin Luther King Jr. To his right is Bush's nominee for secretary of education and Houston school superintendent Rod Paige.

But Moscow recently has said it was prepared to discuss the issue with the new administration.

The Russians fear, as does Beijing and Washington's allies in Europe, that the system would revive the arms race. China for its part warned Mr Bush to resist the temptation to seek a U.S. nuclear "hegemony" that would upset the global balance. Beijing worries that U.S. missile defenses will be extended to Taiwan and that they will neutralize China's own nuclear deterrent.

Outgoing Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, a Democrat, is herself concerned about the risk of NMD setting off a destabilising arms race ultimately involving South Asia where newly nuclear armed India and Pakistan are squared off. (AFP)

ON my first visit to Washington in 1989, I was taken to the bar of the Willard Hotel, a favoured watering-hole of the political classes. As we sat down, my companion nudged me and pointed to a burly, bowed figure sitting alone in a corner, staring deeply into his drink, a picture of dejection. "That's John Tower," my friend whispered. "And that's what Washington can do to you."

A few weeks earlier Mr Tower, a former Senator from Texas, had been rejected as President George Bush's nominee for defence secretary after one of the nastiest confirmation hearings ever held.

Mr Tower, the first Cabinet nominee to be turned aside since 1959, had raged against the unfairness of his treatment and the accusations of "drinking and womanising" that had ended his career: "There is no finding that I have ever breached established legal and ethical standards or been derelict in my duty," he insisted, to no avail.

And so now he sat alone in a bar, an image of how the mighty can fall, and of how purely brutal American politics can become at its highest reaches.

More than 10 years later, another such sacrificial victim has been dispatched.

Linda Chavez, President-elect George W Bush's choice for labour secretary, never even got as far as a confirmation hearing, but the accusations, denials and manoeuvring that preceded her withdrawal followed an almost ritual pattern of political blood-letting.

An outspoken conservative, Ms Chavez's opposition to affirmative action and a minimum wage had already provoked howls of protest from liberal Democrats and union leaders, but within hours of her nomination, a far more serious — and ultimately lethal — objection had been unearthed.

In the early 1990s, it emerged, Ms Chavez had taken into her home a Guatemalan illegal immigrant. The woman had been given money by Ms Chavez, and she had performed household chores.

Ms Chavez and the Bush transition team insisted that Marta Mercado had been a guest, not an employee, that the work she performed had been voluntary and that the money she had been paid represented pocket-money, not wages.

Mr Bush's opponents claimed that the woman aspiring to oversee and enforce labour laws, including those applying to immigrants, had violated federal law by employing an illegal immigrant.

Pressure mounted, Republican support began to waver, the Bush team was publicly supportive and privately furious that the immigrant problem had not been discovered in the vetting process. Last Tuesday, Ms Chavez reluctantly committed *hara-kiri* on live television, but not before she added to the sense of ritualistic drama by parading many former immigrants before the cameras to testify to the help she had given them in starting new lives in America.

"I just want to say that I love Linda very much, she's like a second mother to me," lisped a young Hispanic girl in a performance that must have left the Bush team squirming.

Ms Chavez withdrew "with regret" and asperity, insisting that she was the victim of the "politics of personal dest-

Barbecue name of the game

Each new US administration sees the ritual cull of at least one Cabinet nominee. As President George W Bush's candidate for Labour Secretary is forced to step down, BEN MACINTYRE reports on Washington's passion for blood sports



ruction". "The game in Washington is a game of search and destroy," she declared. And while her other statements about her relationship with Ms Mercado remain questionable, this one was entirely correct. The nomination and confirmation process has always provided an opportunity for post-election score-settling. One side wins, the other then has the chance to do what it can to derail the people selected for senior positions by the winner. If Ms Chavez's fate sounds familiar, that is because it almost precisely followed the rules of an increasingly ruthless game.

Exactly eight years ago, the boot was on the other foot, when Bill Clinton's nominee for Attorney-General, Zoe Baird, was found to have employed a nanny without paying taxes or social security. On that occasion, it was none other than Ms Chavez who declared: "I think most of the American people were upset during the Zoe Baird nomination that she had hired an illegal alien. That was what upset them more than the fact that she did not pay social security taxes."

Mr Clinton's second choice for Attorney-General, Kimba Wood, had to drop out for similar reasons in what became known as "Nannygate". One of the ironic aspects of those fights is that the woman who eventually became Attorney-General, Janet Reno, was confirmed by a 98-0 vote in a Republican-controlled Senate, but has turned out to be perhaps the most controversial appointment Mr Clinton ever made.

Four years ago, veteran *New York Times* writer RW Apple (Jr) complained that the confirmation process was not what it used to be. "The old 'give the guy a break' mentality, the old inclination to use camaraderie to soften partisanship, has faded, to be replaced in some instances by a hard-edged, sometimes bitter enmity," he wrote.

But if such camaraderie was rare when that observation was made, it has all but evaporated now, after the heart-hardening experience of the impeachment battle and one of the most bitterly-

fought elections in modern history. The political confrontations of recent years have forged an atmosphere of almost Hobbesian aggression, in which political careers are ever more likely to be solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short, and only the dullest or most thick-skinned survive: nobody in American public life is safe from inquisition, and since nobody is perfect, the imperfections will always be out. As Chase Untermeyer, former personnel chief under President George Bush, recently observed, the confirmation process tends to begin with "the presumption of vileness of everybody who serves in public office".

The Senate still confirms the vast majority of nominees by a President or President-elect. Between 1981 and 1994, 98 per cent of the 720,000 people selected for positions requiring approval were confirmed with no difficulty. At the same time, the higher-profile confirmations have become ever more controversial. Some critics argue that the procedure has now become so gruelling that the best candidates are not prepared to face it, and a recent independent inquiry panel concluded that the process has become so politicised and intrusive that it is "under-mining the very trust in government it is supposed to foster".

Too often, the issue of competence or qualifications is lost amid a welter of partisan revelations about immigrant nannies, personal behaviour and past pot-use. Mr Clinton could hardly conceal his relish at the prospect of a confirmation fight over Ms Chavez.

Addressing a union meeting in Washington recently, the President complained that his staff had banned him from telling Ms Chavez jokes in public. "I cannot say any of the things I wanted to say, which would leave you howling in the aisles," he said with a glint.

Since the election there has been much talk, but precious little evidence, of "bipartisanship" one of those meaningless but comforting phrases like "the American people" that US politicians feel obliged to use at regular intervals.

From the outset of the confirmation

hearings, the Senate Democratic leader, Tom Daschle, made it clear that his party was prepared, even anxious for a fight: "A fair hearing doesn't mean you just roll over and say we'll take whomever you send down".

In the Kennedy administration, the average wait for confirmation was 2.3 months; under Mr Clinton the average nominee waited 8.5 months, and in the current febrile climate, the delay was expected to be longer.

US history suggests that when power is divided, either within the Congress or with one party controlling the White House and the other the Senate, then confirmation hearings are likely to be particularly bloody, for example, the rejection of two of Richard Nixon's Supreme Court nominees, Clement Haynsworth and Harrold Carswell.

Supreme Court nominees, since the appointments are for life, are more intensely scrutinised and more often refused, and many trace the general brutalising of the nomination process over the last decade back to the Senate's rejection of the Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork, whose name consequently became a verb.

"To Bork", says former Senator John Danforth, "meant the relentless effort by interest groups to wage a political campaign against a nominee, creating a grotesque image of the person in order to build public pressure."

Ms Chavez did not survive long enough to be Borked, but groups opposed to her were mobilising to do just that, and while she is the first casualty of an embittered political process, she is unlikely to be the last of Mr Bush's nominees to be barbecued thus.

With Ms Chavez falling on her sword or being pushed on to it, attention is returning to John Ashcroft, Mr Bush's nominee for Attorney-General, whose uncompromising conservative views make him an inviting target for the left.

Advocates of gun control, abortion rights, gays and lesbians, and civil rights groups are joining forces to attack the former Missouri Senator for his alleged views on race, abortion and other incendiary issues.

Leaders from about 200 groups, an unprecedented coalition, have joined a "Stop Ashcroft" campaign.

At the same time, Gale Norton's nomination as secretary of the interior is facing stiff opposition from environmentalists who condemn her support for opening wilderness areas to oil exploration. Christie Whitman, the New Jersey Governor and Mr Bush's nominee to head the Environmental Protection Agency, may face further grilling over her 1993 disclosure that she and her husband had employed two Portuguese for more than three years when they were in the country illegally.

"Confirmation has become a blood sport," one Republican Senator said recently. "Everybody in town knows that."

The first kill has been marked up, the scent of blood is in the air, and the full pack is about to be unleashed.

By the end of this political hunting season, there may be several more hunched figures looking like a John Tower in the bar of the Willard Hotel.

— *The Times, London.*

CONSERVATIVE NOMINEES

5/26 Difficult days ahead for Bush

PRESIDENT-ELECT George Bush was expected to have some trouble over nominations, three of them in particular: attorney-general designate John Ashcroft, interior secretary designate Gale Norton and health secretary designate Tommy Thompson. The men in the list belong to the conservative right, are pro-life, or, more significantly for their adversaries, anti-choice, and Ashcroft has had some dubious moments with voluntary desegregation in his home state of Missouri as well as with the appointment of a black judge to the federal court.

One of Bush's nominees, labour secretary designate Linda Chavez, who was under attack for her opposition to affirmative action and minimum wage, has already withdrawn after a confession that she had employed illegal aliens. Nevertheless, much will depend on the mood in Congress. The Senate is now equally divided between Republicans and Democrats, with Vice President-elect Dick Cheney holding the casting vote. The House of Representatives is also almost evenly divided. This could mean ugly moments for nominees considered controversial by the Democrats.

About twenty senators from the Congressional Black Caucus raised their voices when the electoral votes from Florida were counted and a dozen of them walked out. They are not likely to take kindly to people like Ashcroft who don't seem to think much of affirmative action, especially since he is going to head a department like Justice that all minorities consider critical to their condition. The fact that his administration is full of Arabs, Blacks and Hispanics is hardly going to be a consolation for people who will be looking at policies and decisions. Also, having a pro-lifer head the health department is like applying the sledgehammer to a debate that has ripped American society apart, arouses passions on both sides and would, probably, have required a more delicate negotiation.

Bush himself is taking a tough line on all these controversial issues and has said he will not give federal money to institutions or agencies not toeing the government line on abortions. The prediction was that Bush would have to respect his own mandate, afflicted with a high degree of uncertainty, and be balanced in his appointments. This is not apparent. In fact, all indications are to the contrary, that Bush will plunge America's parliament into a bitter partisan confrontation from the word go.

The sole Democrat nominee, Japanese-American Norman Mineta, is shoved into a politically insensitive office like transportation, very understandably. There is only so far that a president with by and large staunch conservative credentials can go in accommodating bipartisan views in his administration. Senator Tom Daschle has made it clear that Democrats will not be steamrolled into approving nominations that upset their fundamental convictions, they are probably preparing for a long-drawn out confrontation. Vice-President Al Gore said more or less the same thing at the electoral college ballot. Presidents don't always get their way. One remembers that Clinton had to see two of his nominees for attorney-general scuttled by the Senate over allegations similar to the one that brought Linda Chavez down. As one commentator has pointed out, partisan rivalry has deepened over the years, the most recent aggravation being the Monica Lewinsky impeachment and no quarter will be given or asked on Capitol Hill when the nomination drama

THE STATESMAN

16 JAN 2001

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Another Bush nominee finds the going tough

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

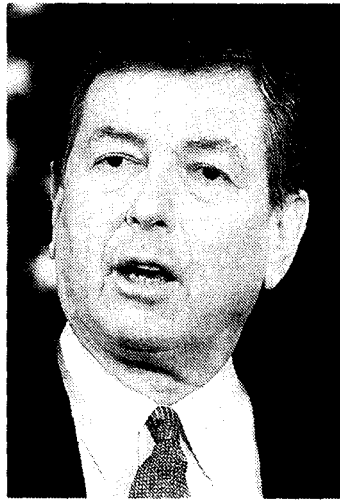
NEW YORK, JAN. 12. Even as the Republican President-elect, Mr. George W. Bush gives the final touches to his Cabinet, some Democratic lawmakers and liberal groups are gearing for a battle over the nomination of Mr. John Ashcroft to the post of Attorney-General. The anti-Ashcroft group may be encouraged by the manner in which Mr. Bush's pick for the Labour Secretary withdrew her name. Ms. Linda Chavez had indicated lack of support from the Bush transition team as a reason for her dropping out.

The good news for Mr. Bush is that some of his nominees for Cabinet posts are having a relatively easy time in the Senate confirmation hearings. Mr. Don Evans for the post of Commerce Secretary had little trouble so did Mr. Rod Paige, an African-American, chosen to head the Education Department. And Mr. Donald Rumsfeld had a relatively easy time before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday. But even Mr. Rumsfeld was not spared — he was quizzed about a conversation some 30 years ago where some racist statements had been made by the former President, Mr. Richard Nixon.

But the real fight is yet to begin and all indications are that the incoming Bush team has a real battle over Mr. Ashcroft. The Senate Judiciary Committee has scheduled two hearings starting next Tuesday and among the witnesses will be Mr. Ronnie White, an African-American State Supreme Court Judge who was opposed by Mr. Ashcroft for a nomination to the Federal Bench. Conservatives say that the opposition of Mr. Ashcroft has little to do with racism, rather that Justice White had a "soft" record on crime and with criminals.

If Senior Republican leaders in the Senate are confident that Mr. Ashcroft will come through successfully, others are not as sure. In fact, some are already saying that the battle over Mr. Ashcroft will be something like the one witnessed in 1987 over the nomination of Judge Robert Bork by the then President, Mr. Ronald Reagan, to the Supreme Court. The Liberals managed to scuttle it but the process was nasty.

Republican supporters of Mr. Ashcroft say that the opposition to the former Senator from Missouri is because of his pro-life views and that the Liberal groups have managed to get the opposition file from the campaign of Mr. Mel Carnahan to discredit Mr. Ashcroft. Mr. Carnahan, Governor of



John Ashcroft

Missouri, was pitted opposite Mr. Ashcroft for the Senate seat when he died in an airplane crash. His name, however, stayed on the ballot and he won the election. His wife, Ms. Jean Carnahan has been appointed to the Senate for a two-year period. Ms. Carnahan has not said how she will vote on Mr. Ashcroft's nomination.

It is not just Democratic Senators who are opposed to the views of Mr. Ashcroft on abortion and gun control. Organised labour and civil rights activists are coming out in full strength against the former Republican Senator. Civil rights leaders and activists are warning Democratic Senators not to approve the nomination of Mr. Ashcroft based on Senate collegiality — with few exceptions Senators are not known to reject "one of their own". Senators are being reminded that Mr. Ashcroft is a candidate of the religious Right who not too long ago accepted an honorary degree from Bob Jones University, a place of higher learning that had opposed inter-racial dating on its campus.

"The fight against John Ashcroft is being waged entirely on ideological grounds by some people outside the United States Senate and that would be a new level of partisanship brought to Washington," a spokesman for Mr. Bush said. Republican lawmakers said the President-elect was a conservative and as such was entitled to have a cabinet of his choosing. In the last two days, conservative lawmakers have stepped up their campaign for Mr. Ashcroft, brushing aside the suggestion that as Attorney-General, the former Missouri Senator would be selective in enforcing laws. The Senate Majority Leader, Mr. Trent Lott dismissed as "ridiculous" the claims of some that Mr. Ashcroft would go easy on polluters, militia members and abortion clinic bombers.

Bush names new Labour Secy, completes Cabinet formation

S Rajagopalan
Washington, January 12

AFTER SUFFERING a setback with Linda Chavez's withdrawal in the wake of the controversy over sheltering an illegal immigrant, President-elect George W Bush has chosen Heritage Foundation scholar Elaine R Chao for the Labour portfolio.

Ms Chao, who is the wife of Republican Senator Mitch McConnell, is of Taiwanese stock and becomes the second Asian-American in the Bush Cabinet, the first being Norman Y Mineta, a Democrat and member of the outgoing Clinton Cabinet.

Unlike Ms Chavez, whose nomination evoked protests from the unions because of her stance on minimum wages and affirmative action, Ms Chao's induction and conciliatory words were welcomed by organised labour. She promised to protect, nurture and develop America's working men and women.

Mr Bush also named Robert B Zoellick as US Trade

Representative. Mr Zoellick has worked in the State and Treasury departments in the Reagan and George Bush administrations.

Having completed his Cabinet formation and other major appointments, save for CIA directorship, Mr Bush's immediate concern seemed to be to get Senate confirmations for two of his embattled nominees: Attorney General designate John Ashcroft and Gale A Norton, who been named Interior Secretary.

On Thursday, Mr Bush defended the nominations in the face of unremitting criticism by liberal groups and said it was time to tone down the rhetoric. Some 200 bodies have teamed up to thwart Mr Ashcroft's confirmation by focusing on some of his past actions, reckoned to be rooted in his strong conservative background.

Taking up cudgels on behalf of Mr Ashcroft, whom he described as one with "a good heart" on civil rights matters, Mr Bush hinted that he would lobby for his confirmation by calling Senators. He conceded Mr Ashcroft could face

tough questioning, but said his nominee was prepared for that.

DEFENCE: Mr Bush's Defence nominee Donald Rumsfeld let it be known that that the Bush Administration would vigorously pursue the controversial National Missile Defence System (NMDS), which is being opposed not only by Russia and China but by some of the US's western allies as well.

At his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Mr Rumsfeld said the time has come for the military to refashion itself in order to protect the US against new global threats. The NMDS will be central to the new initiative. "The old deterrence of the Cold War era is imperfect for dissuading the threats of the 21st century," he commented.

A 12-member commission, which Mr Rumsfeld headed until his recent Cabinet induction, has also come out with its final report, stressing that the US should be ready to put weapons in space to protect its interests. The document, however, does not bear Mr Rumsfeld's signature.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

13 JAN 2001

Bush labour lady falls in ego-busters' first salvo

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Jan. 10: Washington's favourite post-election pastime of destroying big egos and formidable reputations is on.

Linda Chavez, who was nominated by president-elect George W. Bush to be his labour secretary, became its first victim when she withdrew from the field yesterday even before Senate hearings for her confirmation had begun.

Chavez, a Hispanic from New Mexico, was accused of having accommodated an illegal immigrant Marta Mercado, from Guatemala in her home 10 years ago and made her do domestic chores without being given the minimum wage.

At least four more of Bush cabinet nominees will come under fire on Capitol Hill during the Sen-

ate confirmation process in what cynics describe as Washington's quadrennial process of personal destruction. On a smaller scale, as a side show, sniping has also begun against potential nominees to the job of assistant secretary of state for South Asia, who will deal with India as part of that job.

Among those in the firing line as part of the confirmation process is secretary of state designate, General Colin Powell, who is being accused of having received \$200,000 from an endowment at Tufts University for a single speech in November, five days before the presidential election.

The allegation, which surfaced in *Jerusalem Post*, said the endowment was subsidised by Lebanese deputy prime minister Issam Fares. The charge was pounced on by watchdog groups

however, being organised against Attorney General designate John Ashcroft, who lost his Senate bid from Missouri in November against a dead candidate, state governor Mel Carnahan.

More than 200 diverse groups, including labour unions, minorities, environmentalists, pro-abortionists and gays, yesterday banded together in Washington to stop Ashcroft at any cost. They will immediately start a campaign of newspaper advertisements, rallies and lobbying with Senate members. Son of a Pentecostal clergyman and a teetotaler, Ashcroft is so conservative that he once refused to dance even at his inaugural ball as Missouri governor. He is opposed to abortion even in cases of rape and incest, favouring the practice only if the mother's life is in danger from

pregnancy. A smoking gun in Ashcroft's confirmation process would be a speech he made at Bob Jones University in Missouri last year while accepting an honorary degree. The University discourages inter-racial dating among students.

A copy of his speech is now untraceable. Defence secretary designate Donald Rumsfeld is in the line of fire for acquiescing in racial remarks made by president Richard Nixon almost three decades ago, which were found in the infamous Watergate tapes.

Rumsfeld is a former aide to Nixon. Gale Norton, the interior secretary designate, on the other hand is expected to have a hard time on Capitol Hill because of her lack of sympathy to environmental issues and her eagerness to open wild areas to industry. In the

case of the South Asia job at the state department, rivals of Shirin Tahir-Kheli, a former US ambassador for political affairs at the UN, are already sniping at her for her alleged pro-Pakistan bias and alleged antipathy to the BJP.

Tahir-Kheli, who now heads foreign policy studies at Johns Hopkins university here, has worked with the incoming secretary of state when she was on the staff of the National Security Council in the Ronald Reagan administration.

Among other contenders for the South Asia job are James Clad, a New Zealand-born journalist who once worked in New Delhi and Robert Oakley former US envoy to Pakistan. Sniping by their rivals as part of the confirmation politics here may begin soon as well.



Marta Mercado who was said to have been given shelter by Chavez. (AFP)

here on the ground that potential cabinet nominees should not take money from sources they would be dealing with in their official roles. Besides, Fares is considered close to Syria, which is widely perceived here as a state with links to Arab terrorists. The biggest drive ever to be launched against a cabinet nomination in US history is,



Linda Chavez (right) in Washington on Monday. (AFP)

U.S. / ROW OVER EMPLOYING ILLEGAL ALIEN

HD-16 11/1 wsc(1)

Bush nominee withdraws

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 10. In what is clearly the first major setback to the transition efforts of the President-elect, Mr. George W. Bush, his Labour Secretary nominee, Ms. Linda Chavez, has withdrawn her name in the wake of growing criticism in the last few days of the alleged assistance she gave to an illegal alien.

Complaining that a "search and destroy" effort was forcing her to get out of the incoming Bush administration, Ms. Chavez announced on Tuesday afternoon that her relationship with a Guatemalan immigrant in the early 1990's had become a "distraction".

At a time when Ms. Chavez's professional and ideological credentials were undergoing intense scrutiny by Democrats and Labour groups, news surfaced that she had an illegal alien stay with her for about two years doing a variety of odd jobs and in return getting free housing and some spending money.

Critics immediately pounced on Ms. Chavez, saying she had not been paying a proper salary and social security.

Mr. Bush, who arrived in Washington on Tuesday for a brief stay, tried to make the best out of a bad situation by insisting that Ms. Chavez would have been an asset at the Labour Department.

"I absolutely believe she would have been a fine Cabinet Secretary, but I understand her reluctance to move forward", he remarked.

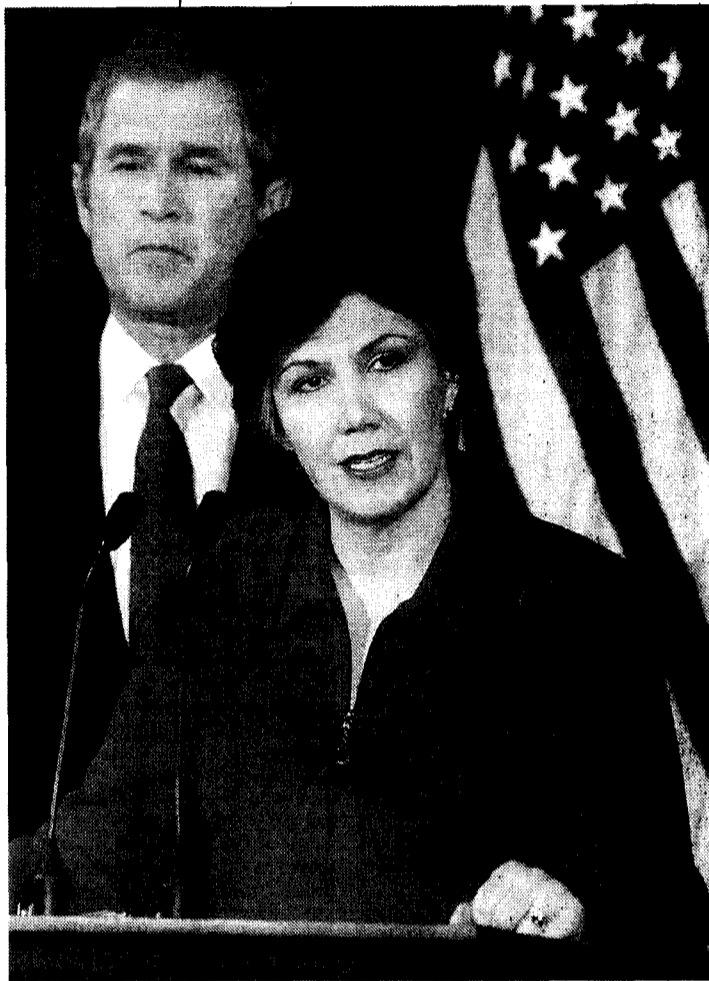
Mr. Bush had not spoken with Ms. Chavez directly on Tuesday but he learned of her decision early afternoon from his Vice-President-elect, Mr. Richard Cheney.

Ms. Chavez had a meeting with Mr. Cheney and the incoming White House Chief of Staff, Mr. Andrew Card. Later in an interview, Ms. Chavez seemed to suggest that the Bush team had not been very supportive.

"I have also been around this town long enough to know that if no one is calling you and saying 'hang in there', that is not a great signal either", she told CNN.

Democrats on Capitol Hill and Labour and other interest groups have not immediately responded to Ms. Chavez's exit, but the development will have hardly any bearing on the strategies being evolved for two other nominees of the Bush administration — Ms. Gale Norton as Interior Secretary and Mr. John Ashcroft, nominee for Attorney General.

Of the two, there is the intense



Ms. Linda Chavez with the President-elect, Mr. George Bush, in this Jan. 2 file picture.

focus on Mr. Ashcroft. Democrats, civil rights leaders and activists are gunning for the former Republican Senator for his track record on social and political issues.

A candidate of the religious right wing, Mr. Ashcroft is being criticised for his conservative views on abortion and over the fact that he had actively opposed the appointment of an African American Judge to the Federal Court Bench.

Supporters of Mr. Ashcroft in the Senate and elsewhere are confident that he has impeccable credentials that will carry him through the nomination and confirmation process; and the expectation is that if push comes to shove, the incoming administration will put up a spirited fight on behalf of Mr. Ashcroft quite unlike the manner in which it conducted itself in Ms. Chavez's case.

And there is something called Senate collegiality where the present law makers do not reject "one of their own" unless, of course, there was something terribly wrong.

In the case of Mr. Ashcroft, a

compelling argument is being made that he stands by his conservative principles and that he will faithfully implement the laws of the land.

But both Mr. Ashcroft and the incoming administration know full well the kind of political fight that is in store, and perhaps a bruising one too.

Meanwhile, prior to making his "final" move to Washington next week, Mr. Bush has dropped by this city for two days. He has plans to meet the outgoing Defence Secretary, Mr. Richard Cohen, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a military briefing.

Apart from having meetings with his staff, Mr. Bush is also likely to make some major appointments.

Some of the positions still open are the next Ambassador to the United Nations, the head of the Central Intelligence Agency and the U.S. Trade Representative.

Among the contenders for the USTR post are Mr. Robert Zoellick, a former senior official of the earlier Bush administration and Mr. Richard Fischer, the current deputy trade representative.

11 JAN 2001

Bush faces challenges to Cabinet

Washington, January 8

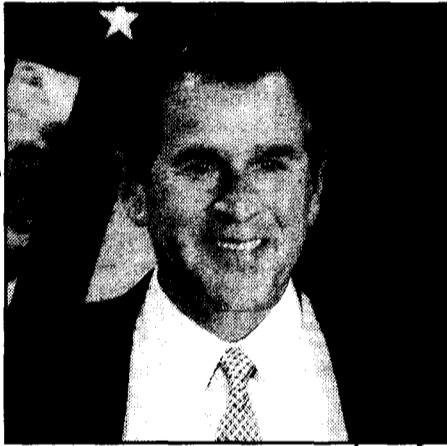
WITH LESS than two weeks to go before taking office, President-elect George W Bush faced intensifying challenges to his Cabinet picks from a sharply divided Congress.

Senators took to the airways yesterday to raise questions about some of the controversial positions on abortion and labour rights of some of Bush's nominees, as former presidential candidate John McCain promised to bring campaign finance reform to the forefront from the start.

Speaking on CBS's 'Face The Nation', Senate majority leader, Democrat Tom Daschle, said the Senate needed to look into "some of the more controversial" Bush nominations.

"Today, it's an open question about whether some of these nominees will be confirmed," he said.

Senators are expected to grill Bush's selection of John Ashcroft, a conservative and strong opponent of abortion, as the nation's new attorney general.



He has also come under fire for his positions on race, after opposing voluntary desegregation of schools in his home state of Missouri and a

black nominee to a federal judgeship.

"It is a divisive, not a unifying nomination," said Democratic Senator John Kerry from Massachusetts.

Bush's nominees to head the labour department, ardent conservative Linda Chavez, and the interior department, Gale Norton, are also expected to face tough confirmation fights.

Some analysts believe that while Ashcroft, Norton and Chavez will face a broadside of tough questions, the Democratic leadership does not really wish to upset the bipartisan apple cart by overturning appointments.

Instead, they want to send a warning shot to the Bush administration that it should think twice before introducing strongly partisan legislation or choosing staunch conservatives to fill supreme court openings.

Bush also faces challenges from within his own party, with formal rival Senator John McCain vowing to introduce legislation on campaign finance reform, which Bush opposes, early in the session. (AFP)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

9 JAN 2001

Elections in America

No Cause for India to be Smug

By DIPANKAR GUPTA

THE long post-election wrangling in the US prompted many commentators in India to occupy a high moral ground. There was even the half-facetious suggestion that we should lend our Chief Election Commissioner to America for a while to bring its election laws up to speed. There was a distinct sense of joy in some quarters, both in India and elsewhere, that the most powerful country in the world was looking silly in its own backyard. The word is schadenfreude when people take extraordinary pleasure in somebody else's misfortune; and schadenfreude it was that most of us revelled in at America's discomfiture.

Now let us put things in perspective. The election of the American president was for the most powerful person in the world. This was no ordinary election. Further the result of this election was poised on a razor's edge. And yet there was no violence. Not a single incidence of murder and mayhem was reported amidst all the tension, the legal battles, the night-long vigils, and the street parades. This also in spite of the fact that Jesse Jackson took out a march in Florida when tempers were rising and patience running out.

This is where we in India can learn lessons from the post-election political imbroglio in the US. Before we rush to be judgmental, it is worth casting a quick glance at what happens during our elections. Even the most local of elections at the panchayat level is fraught with violent confrontations between opponents. Well after the results are officially declared the war rages on. Then there is the well-known Laloo Prasad syndrome which says whenever in doubt rig the results, and rig blatantly.

More than anybody else, the Americans now realise that a few things are wrong with their constitution. In the years to come there will probably be a slew of suggestions on constitutional reforms. It must be remembered that the US is very cautious about constitutional amendments unlike some other countries we know. Americans mull over constitutional issues for the longest time trying to reconcile the vision of their constitutional forebearers with the exigencies of the day. Still, it is hard to imagine that the lessons of this election will be passed over easily without some very hard-nosed debates in

America's political firmament.

It is almost certain that America's electoral college system will draw a lot of attention in the years to come. Its antiquated and unwieldy characteristics were in full display. Then there are American courts whose judges are openly partisan. This cannot be such a good thing no matter which way one looks at it. More importantly, America cannot afford to take another chance like this. It may not be so lucky next time. So, all right, America is not perfect, but what is new about that? Yet there is something new. What this election has shown is America's demonstrated ability to ride out the hard times by drawing deep into its institutional foundations.

There is a lesson in all this for democratic practice in India. We, in this country, are generally careless about institutional durability and opt instead for quick fix solutions. This is because we generally want

IN BRIEF

- Unlike in the US, even local elections in India witness violent confrontations
- The US was able to ride out these tense elections by drawing on its institutional foundations
- In the end, Gore's supporters demonstrated their respect for the law

guaranteed results. If the election laws, such as they are, do not favour a certain party there is nothing wrong in subverting them for the larger glory of this or that cause. The cause takes precedence over process. Flouting proper procedure is, therefore, not cast in a reprehensible light because the cause looms largest of all among political activists. In one case the cause could be Hindu nationalism, and in another the assertion of certain castes, and in the third the consolidation of linguistic identity. As there is no shortage of causes there is consequently no dearth of excuses for breaking the law and subverting institutions.

It is not as if Gore and Bush did not have causes. There were major differences in their respective poli-

And, yes, the supporters of Gore and Bush were deeply committed to what they thought was right and appropriate for America to adopt. Even so they let institutional procedures take their course. When the Florida election commissioner declared Bush the winner, Gore supporters did not bay for her blood but merely took the matter to the Florida court and pressed their best lawyers into service.

When at last the supreme court delivered its fractured judgment the two warring sides quickly made up and kissed their respective wives. There was a sense of relief that the battle was over. There was no clear moral winner, but on legal grounds the day belonged to George W Bush. Now the decision of the supreme court could be wrong. But this cannot be an excuse to undermine the judicial institutions of the country. Even before the judgment was announced there was a clear sense of apprehension among Gore supporters that the verdict would not go their way. So they tried to stall the passage of the case to the federal court hoping that the Florida court's dispensation would help them to pull off a last minute victory. In this case, however, they were not saved by the bell: in fact, it was the bell that let them down.

No one won by a knock-out and yet it was clear the moment the supreme court's decision was known that the game was up. Gore's supporters were surely disappointed with the verdict, but they quietly went home determined to return another day. Perhaps in due course they would push for constitutional reforms. In the meanwhile Gore delivered his best speech ever conceding defeat leading many in his ranks to wonder why all this panache had evaporated during the election duels. There is, however, another way of explaining Gore's extraordinary defeat accepting speech. He was probably proud of his contribution to the dignity and stability of America's institutions.

This then is the lesson that the recent American election has to teach us in India. We could begin by rubbing off some of our smugness at America's plight and learn a lesson from her. It means for a democracy to have strong institutions. So what if the best man does not always win?

THE TIMES OF INDIA

9 JAN 2001

Black walkout as Congress seals Bush win

DESIKAN THIRUNARAYANAPURAM
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Jan. 7. Reminders of the bitter battle over the presidential election echoed on Capitol Hill yesterday as Congress, in a joint session presided by the Vice-President, Mr Al Gore, certified Mr George W Bush's victory amid a walk-out by the Congressional Black Caucus.

In keeping with tradition, Congress tallied electoral votes from the 50 states and the District of Columbia, but when it came to Florida's 25 votes, several Democrats, most of them members of the Congressional Black Caucus, stood up to block the counting.

Mr Gore, standing behind the speaker's desk, ruled the objection could not be heard because of an 1877 law that requires any protest of electoral votes to be accompanied by the signature of a Senator. No Senator agreed to join in the 20 objections raised by the Democrats.

"It is a sad day in the USA when we can't find a Senator to sign this objection," said Mr JL

Jackson Jr, Illinois Democrat, looking at Senators, including Democrats, who said they thought it futile and divisive to keep up the election battle.

When Florida's 25 votes were accepted, about a dozen members of the Congressional Black Caucus walked out in protest.

Shortly before 3 p.m., Mr Gore read out the numbers that showed his 271 to 266 electoral college defeat and said the votes "shall be deemed a sufficient declaration" for the election of Mr Bush and Mr Dick Cheney, his run-

ning mate. To win, a presidential candidate needs 270 electoral votes.

"May God bless our new President and new Vice-President and may God bless the USA," Mr Gore said.

Later, he reacted to the walk-out by the Black members of Congress saying: "I didn't ever expect to get 100 per cent of the votes."

The Congressmen who staged a walk-out later said at a news conference that they did not consider Mr Bush the legitimate President.



Mr George W Bush

Bush cabinet a mixed bag of conservatives and radicals

Resistance to Ashcroft's inclusion continues

Julian Borger
Washington

GEOGE BUSH'S cabinet blends old-school pragmatic conservatism with rightwing radicalism on key domestic issues, tempered by the striking ethnic diversity of the lineup.

But despite the cabinet's inclusive appearance, resistance to the new administration continued to focus on Bush's nominees for attorney general, John Ashcroft, a radical conservative.

There is also expected to be tough questioning by environmentalists during confirmation hearings for Gale Norton, the interior secretary-designate who is a committed proponent of private property rights against government conservation priorities in battles over the creation of nature reserves.

Tommy Thompson's nomination as secretary of health and human services is also likely to draw opposition from abortion rights groups, who are concerned over his fierce anti-abortion stand while Governor of Wisconsin.

Critics, meanwhile, have portrayed the foreign policy team - including Colin Powell as secretary of state, Donald Rumsfeld as defence secretary, Condoleezza Rice as national security advisor (not at present a cabinet-level position) and Dick Cheney as Vice-President with a clear coordinating portfolio - as a throw-back to the Cold War era. Each of them served in earlier Republican administrations and all are opponents of the kind of humanitarian intervention pioneered under Clinton.

However, in appointing Rumsfeld, a successful businessman as well as a government veteran, Bush favoured pragmatic management skills in national security issues over ideological zeal. He rejected rightwing demands for the appointment of Dan Coats, a conservative former Senator whose priority would have been to reverse Clinton-era measures promoting tolerance of gays in the armed services.

Bush's cabinet is clearly intended to give his team a more progressive complexion. *(Guardian News Service)*

WHO'S WHO IN NEW ADMINISTRATION



Spencer Abraham
Energy
Arab-American who supports Bush's proposal to open up Alaska for oil prospecting



John Ashcroft
Attorney General
A controversial appointment. Hardliner on social issues like abortion and affirmative action



Linda Chavez
Labour
Former head of Centre for Equal Opportunity, a conservative thinktank on racial affairs



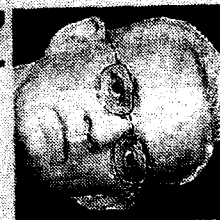
Don Evans
Commerce
The Texas oilman has been raising money for Bush campaigns since 1978



Norman Mineta
Transportation
Japanese-American Japanese-American Democrat. Made commerce secretary by Clinton in July



Gale Norton
Interior
A conservative who backs property owners over the federal creation of nature reserves



Paul O'Neill
Treasury
A friend of Alan Greenspan, the chairman of Federal Reserve, the US central bank



Roderick Palge
Education
Impressed the President-elect as schools superintendent in the troubled city of Houston



Colin Powell
Secretary of State
Chairman of joint chiefs of staff under first President Bush. Most popular political figure in US



Anthony Principi
Veterans Affairs
Son of Argentinian immigrant. A Vietnam veteran who has respect of veterans' group



Donald Rumsfeld
Defence
Veteran of four Republican administrations and defence secretary under President Ford



Tommy Thompson
Health
Committed pro-life, seen by pro-choice women as a sign Bush will limit right to choose



Christine Todd Whitman
Environment
Moderate Republican. Environmentalists say her record on conservation is mixed



Ann Veneman
Agriculture
Deputy agriculture secretary for elder Bush. Now the first woman to run the department

Will Uncle Sam go into a shell?

HD-16
7/1

FORGET THE campaign rhetoric on foreign policy, be it at the time of the primaries or what was put out in book form at the Republican National Convention. In fact, if there is one thing going for a Bush administration in the realm of foreign and defence affairs, it is that there is little baggage from the campaign trail; and for one very good reason — foreign policy hardly mattered.

To those making the point that Mr. George W. Bush is not quite qualified to deal with foreign and defence policies the question to be posed is whether it matters for a President to be an expert in foreign affairs at all. One does not have to go very far in seeing the kind of ground the present U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton covered, be it with respect to the Asia-Pacific, Europe or the Americas. Presidents need solid advisors and the ability to make good judgment calls on foreign policy, based on the inputs from their trusted lieutenants.

The advantage for the President-elect is that though his team may be reminiscent of the Cold War era, it is sure-footed and quite aware of the basic framework of how American foreign policy ought to be pursued. In charge of diplomacy will be a former Joint Chief of Staff. Characterised as a "thinker", Gen. Colin Powell may bring with him to Foggy Bottom some of his military lingo, but he is not expected to fumble.

American foreign policy will not be undergoing any drastic changes for Mr. Bush and his advisors are quite aware of what it means to undo the developments of the last eight years. Foreign policy will be dominated by America's interests and the

The Bush Administration foreign policy will be dominated by America's interests and the Republican belief that the U.S. should not be the world's policeman, says SRIDHAR KRISHNASWAMI.

Republican belief that the United States cannot and should not be the world's policeman.

If there was one consistent criticism of the Clinton administration, it was that the U.S. has over-extended itself. The new Secretary of State has already enunciated that the U.S. will be extremely reluctant to get involved overseas, but if it did that would be with overwhelming force.

Very soon in the foreign policy ballgame, the Bush administration will have to come to grips with reality — it is so much easier to throw words on the campaign trail, be it on China, Russia or the National Missile Defence shield. Spewing rhetoric to a hand-picked crowd is a lot easier than sifting through the stakes involved in altering established relationships.

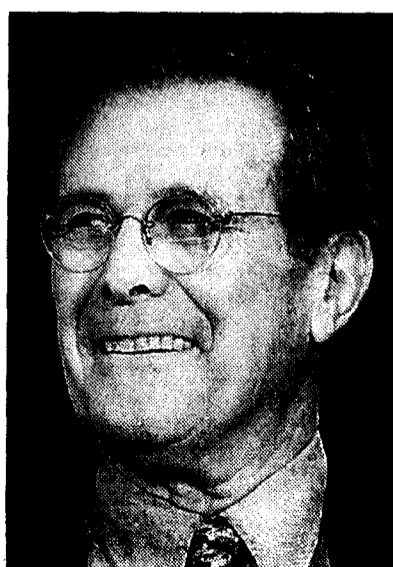
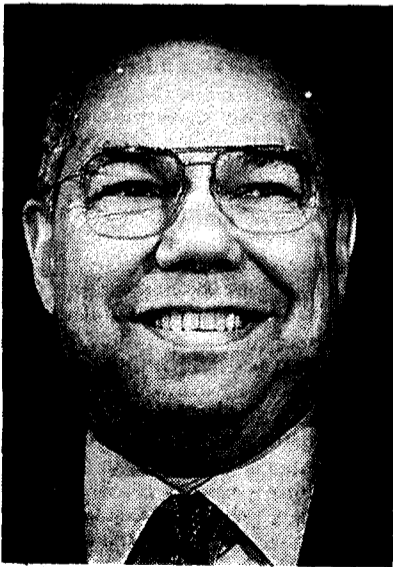
For Gen. Powell, the Secretary of Defence, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld — who has seen four Republican Presidents — and the National Security Advisor, Ms. Condoleezza Rice, the prime task would be managing the challenges of the next four years. The Bush administration

has the usual and convenient "suspects" in the international system — the Saddam Husseins, the Osama bin Ladens, the Slobodan Milosevics, the Sudans and the Iraqs. All of these came in very handy to the Clinton administration and in a variety of ways.

But the last eight years have also seen a lot of distance travelled in West Asia, China, North Korea, Russia and to a certain extent Iran. Even in the last days of his Presidency, Mr. Clinton is trying to bring about an accord of sorts between the Israelis and the Palestinians, but the Bush administration is unlikely to pursue this issue with the same intensity. After all, Candidate Bush had maintained that the agenda and the time-frame must be set by the parties involved, and not the U.S.

It will be basically left to the Bush administration whether or not to further pursue the gains on the ground in the last several years. On the one hand the incoming administration is not going to bend over backwards to humour Beijing as the Clinton administration had done, especially in the last four years. What can be expected of the Bush administration is a reversion to the foundations of "old" alliances — Japan in East Asia — and a wariness in dealing with North Korea.

But if the Bush administration succumbs to the right wing pro-Taiwan lobby and decides to step up pressure on China, then Beijing will surely respond by giving new headaches to Washington on different fronts, including non-proliferation and trade. A Republican administration that is so indebted to big business will surely think twice before squandering away the mega



THE NEW MANDARINS: Gen. Colin Powell, Ms. Condoleezza Rice and Mr. Donald Rumsfeld.

U.S. / SENATE VOTE GIVES DEMOCRATS EQUAL SHARE IN POWER

Republicans unhappy over package

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 6. The Republican leadership in the Senate is not entirely happy with the package that has been worked out on power sharing, but the Grand Old Party really did not have much of a choice. By a voice vote, the Senate approved a mechanism that will see Democrats and Republicans share, among other things, equal number of seats on Committees and money to run panels.

Senior Republican Senators and some party leaders were miffed that the party had to give up some prized privileges in spite of the fact that technically it would be the "majority" party in the upper House by virtue of the next Vice-President, Mr. Richard Cheney, being able to cast the tie-breaking vote. But with the Senate evenly split at 50-50, the Democrats have been pressing for a larger role and much more than on the symbolic fronts.

The Republicans will still have control over Committee Chairs but the Resolution passed has called for an even division of Committee assignments and the same amounts of money to run the Committees. In the event of a tie vote in the Committee which normally would



The Senate Minority Leader, Mr. Tom Daschle (left), and the Senate Majority Leader, Mr. Trent Lott, at a news conference on Capitol Hill on Friday — AP

committees. Neither of
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without much fuss. In
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seen as to how this is
The fear in some quar-
ork that has been agreed

to could lead to stalemate at the time of actual
debate and voting in the various committees
and sub-committees.

But the optimism is that the Senate Majority
and the Minority Leaders will be able to guide
the Chamber through in the event of a dispute.

And one of the first indications will come
when the Senate gets into the serious legisla-
tive business — or even the confirmation
hearings — after the inauguration of the 43rd
President on Jan. 20.

THE HINDU

7 JAN 2001

Bush names Democrat as secretary

REUTERS

AUSTIN (USA), Jan. 3. — President-elect, Mr George W Bush, followed his pledge to create a diverse and bipartisan government and brought in a Japanese-American, a Hispanic and an Arab-American in his Cabinet yesterday.

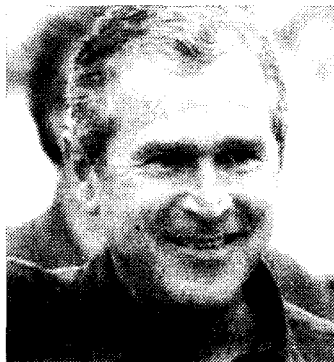
Mr Bush, himself a Republican, named Mr Norman Mineta, a Democrat, as his transportation secretary. Mr Mineta was previously the commerce secretary in the outgoing Clinton administration.

The new labour secretary, Ms Linda Chavez (53), was a conservative immigration

specialist who served with the civil rights commission in the administration of the former President, Mr Ronald Reagan.

Mr Spencer Abraham (48) has been nominated as the energy secretary. Mr Abraham, a

Republican, was the only Arab-American in the Senate, until he was defeated in November



Mr George W Bush

last year after a single six-year term.

Describing himself as "the grandson of poor Lebanese immigrants," Mr Abraham noted that his department faced serious and immediate issues.

The energy department is being asked by

Mr Bush to increase production of domestic energy, including finding more sources of oil and

gas, and tighten security at nuclear weapons laboratories.

Announcing the nominations, Mr Bush said: "We understand our national security depends on our energy security".

"We must meet rising demand for energy with new domestic exploration and production, we must produce and conserve all forms of energy in America and we must do so in an economically sound and environmentally sensitive way," he added.

The present nominations have brought the number of named cabinet posts to 15.

The nominations, however, are yet to be confirmed by the Senate.

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