

US Republicans get new leader in Senate

28/12 SF3
Press Trust of India

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24. — Senate Republicans have unanimously elected Mr Bill Frist, the only practising surgeon in the US Senate, as their new leader replacing Mr Trent Lott who resigned following his alleged remarks on racism.

Mr Frist, accepting the new position yesterday, pledged to help heal the party and to repair the division caused by his predecessor who reportedly suggested the USA would have been better off now if it still practised racial segregation.

He promised to try to expand the base of the mostly white Republican Party by persuading minorities to join it.

“We must dedicate ourselves to healing those wounds of division that have been reopened so prominently during the past few weeks,” the 50-year-old heart surgeon said. He was unanimously elected during a 45-minute telephone conference call among the 51-member Senate Republican caucus. The first outsider to congratulate Mr Frist was President Mr George W Bush, who made Mr Lott’s departure inevitable by strongly denouncing his remarks publicly. Meanwhile, Mr Lott said he was being removed from his position because he is from the South and a practising Christian.

Gore opts out of 2004 presidential race

WS
17/12
JOANNE ALLEN

Washington, Dec. 16 (Reuters): Former US Vice-President Al Gore's surprise announcement that he would not challenge US President George W. Bush in the 2004 presidential elections has thrown the field wide open for Democratic presidential hopefuls.

Gore was expected to explain further his decision at a news conference this afternoon, in Raleigh, North Carolina, the latest stop on his book tour.

"I think that a campaign that would be a rematch between myself and President Bush would inevitably involve a focus on the past that would, in some measure, distract from the focus on the future," Gore said in an interview on the CBS news program *60 Minutes*.

The announcement ended months of speculation over a possible political rematch between Gore and Bush, who narrowly defeated the former Tennessee senator in the 2000 presidential election.

"The last campaign was an extremely difficult one, and while I have the energy and the drive to go out there and do it again, I think that there are a lot of people within the Democratic



Al Gore

Party who felt exhausted by that," Gore said.

The biggest beneficiary of Gore's decision to step aside is his former 2000 vice-presidential running mate, Sen. Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut. Lieberman began exploring prospects for a possible 2004 White House bid shortly after a divided Supreme Court effectively decided the 2000 race for Bush by refusing to permit Gore a recount in Florida. Lieberman had said if Gore ran again, he would step aside.

While Gore's decision clears the way for Lieberman, it will also likely open the door to other

potential candidates to jump into what will be a wide open contest.

"This helps any and all Democrats considering running because Al clearly would have been the front-runner. Polls showed that," said a former senior adviser in the 2000 Gore-Lieberman campaign. "Now it is wide open."

Rep. Richard Gephardt of Missouri, who stepped down as House of Representatives minority leader last month, has also raised speculation he would run.

And Gore's decision may also nudge into the race Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle, who has long considered a bid.

"This will put more pressure on Daschle and Gephardt," a former Gore adviser said.

"In recent months, it has been Al taking the lead in responding to Bush's economy, war ... Now people will be turning more to see what Daschle and Gephardt have to say."

Daschle and Gephardt, in separate statements, saluted Gore as a trailblazer and dedicated public servant.

"Al Gore got the popular vote in 2000 and I am convinced he would have been a great president," Gephardt said.

17 DEC 2002

THE TELEGRAPH

Former Goldman Sachs chairman emerges as top contender

Bush looks for new team

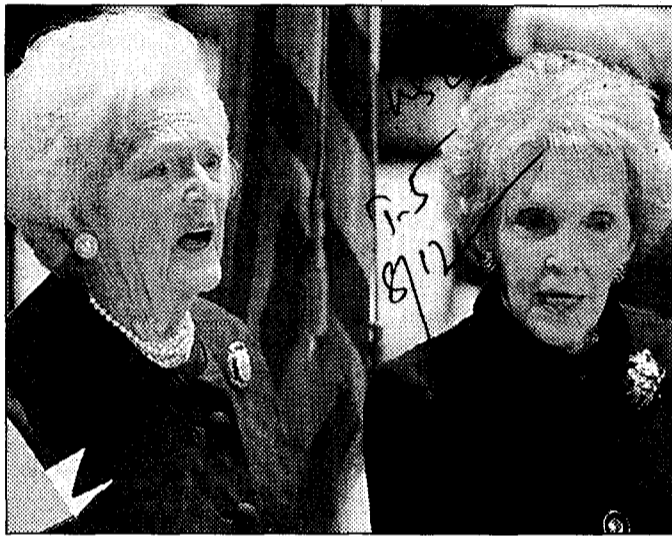
ADAM ENTOUS
AND CAREN BOHAN

Washington, Dec. 7 (Reuters): The White House is focusing on people with Wall Street savvy for its revamped economic team, with former Goldman Sachs chairman Stephen Friedman among those emerging as top contenders for senior economic adviser and US treasury secretary.

Wall Street is not the only place that President George W. Bush is looking for successors to embattled National Economic Council chairman Lawrence Lindsey and treasury secretary Paul O'Neill, both of whom abruptly resigned yesterday.

Possible candidates also include prominent academics led by Stanford University economist Michael Boskin, trusted White House insiders such as commerce secretary Donald Evans, and former lawmakers like Texas Republican Bill Archer.

Republican sources expect a decision as early as Monday for the positions. Those they choose will be expected to champion a tax-cutting agenda — something the White House hopes will bolster Bush's chance of re-election in 2004. A stagnant economy could be his biggest political lia-



Former First Ladies Barbara Bush (left) and Nancy Reagan during a memorial service in Philadelphia. (Reuters)

bility.

Republican sources say Friedman has emerged as an early favourite to replace Lindsey, whose departure came as little surprise.

"Stephen Friedman has been approached," one Republican source said.

A spokesperson for Friedman would neither confirm nor deny any contact with the administration and the White House declined to comment.

Friedman is currently a senior principal at Marsh & McLennan Capital Inc. and a limited partner of Goldman. He was senior chairman of Goldman from 1994 to 1997 and co-chairman or sole chairman from 1990 to 1994.

He was a major contributor to the Republican coffers during the 2000 presidential campaign.

Boskin was chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers under Bush's father and is said to be a friend of

the President. Bush invited him to a recent state dinner.

"Boskin is an intriguing prospect. He's an intellectual heavyweight, he knows the markets and he's a carefully spoken fellow," said a senior Republican congressional aide.

Bush met privately last month with Stanford University professor John Cogan, who advised him on economic policy during the campaign.

Cogan's expertise is in budget matters, and it isn't clear whether the meeting was to discuss a role for Cogan within the administration or to talk about other potential candidates. Vice-President Dick Cheney has also held meetings with several conservative economists.

8 DEC 2002

THE TELEGRAPH

Senate okays Bush's foolproof homeland plan

NICK ANDERSON

WASHINGTON, NOVEMBER 20

THE Senate overwhelmingly approved the most sweeping government shake-up in a half-century on Tuesday, passing a bill that will create a new cabinet department responsible for reducing the US's vulnerability to terrorist attacks.

The Senate vote, 90-9, followed House passage last week of a virtually identical measure to forge a Department of Homeland Security out of two dozen government agencies.

For the first time, one government agency will be responsible for coordinating protection of the nation's borders, coastlines, airports, landmarks, utilities and other major facilities.

The new agency, expected to have more than 170,000 employees, will also help lead the nation's defence against potential chemical, biological or nuclear attacks by terrorists.

Bush pushed hard for the bill following the Republican triumph in this fall's mid-term elections, and Tuesday's action handed him a major victory as the 107th Congress drew to a

9/11 probe takes dramatic turn

■ WASHINGTON: Ramzi Binalshibh, an alleged coordinator of 9/11, now in US custody, has linked accused conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui to the suspected mastermind of the terror strikes, revealing that Moussaoui met with Khalid Sheik Mohammed in Afghanistan in late 2000. Mohammed provided Moussaoui with names of contacts in the US and Binalshibh gave him wired him money to advance the plot. —LATWP

close with several key Senate votes. In a telephone call from Air Force One while flying to Prague for a NATO summit, Bush congratulated Republican leaders as the bill neared passage.

In launching the new security agency, the Bush administration will face fresh challenges. Tom Ridge, who serves as White House director of Homeland Security, is the leading candidate to head the department. Funding for the agency is projected to have an annual budget of \$38 billion. —LATWP

INDIAN EXPRESS

21 NOV 2002

W91 9/11 A STRONGER GEORGE BUSH 110-10

THE UNEXPECTED RESULT of the Congressional elections in the U.S., which has expanded the Republican party's majority in the House of Representatives and allowed it to wrest control of the Senate, has been largely shaped by the electorate's views on domestic matters and its impact would also be felt more on the internal rather than the external spheres. Yet, changes in the political alignments within the sole superpower — subtle and relatively marginal in their overall impact though they may be — will still have implications for the constant dynamics of international politics. Stated in broad terms, these results would appear to have demonstrated that the political tendency which promotes a U.S.-centric attitude towards global affairs is very much on the ascendant. However, the internal dynamics of U.S. politics especially within the Republican party are such that it would take time to determine whether the composition of the legislative wing will make it sway more towards the isolationist or the evangelical trends within this overall matrix. The U.S. tradition of bipartisanship in external affairs and the fact that its legislators, especially the Senators, are not famous for their allegiance to the party line would appear to indicate that there will not be drastic changes in the thrust of Washington's foreign policy emanating purely from these results. In any event, Washington's position on the foreign policy issue that has become its foremost pre-occupation — the question of what is to be done in regard to Iraq — had already been set before the election with a majority of Republicans and Democrats backing up the hard line.

In real terms, the import of this election result might lie more in the boost it has given to the U.S. President, George W. Bush's self-belief since his policies and his personality appear to have given the cutting edge to his party. Mr. Bush had captured the political high ground

for his party well before the election processes got underway by positioning himself as the grand champion of U.S. interests worldwide and had thereby pushed Democratic candidates onto the defensive. The Democrats were not able to play on the misgivings, which many among the U.S. public appear to share with the wider world, in respect of the unilateralist impulses of the administration's foreign and domestic policy for fear that they would be labelled unpatriotic. Since the Democrats were also not able to draw a clear distinction between their approach and that of the Republicans in regard to internal affairs, Mr. Bush could interpret the result as an endorsement of the tough-minded policies he has been implementing in regard to global terrorism and desires to push through in respect of Iraq and other regimes that he believes are renegades. Mr. Bush, who entered office as a novice in international affairs, now has reason to feel more confident about forging ahead with his global agenda.

Mr. Bush's current dominance of the U.S. political scene has been further affirmed by the fact that for the first time since the 1930s one single party is in control of the administration as well as both Houses of Congress. The Republicans have also now been provided the opportunity to mark their stamp on the Judiciary since they now have the wherewithal to appoint their nominees to various levels of the judicial hierarchy. Those leaders of the Democratic party who were being spoken of as potential challengers in the next Presidential elections have been diminished by their failure to galvanise their party even in a situation where (to go by U.S. electoral history) anti-incumbent feelings should have been strong. The rest of the global community has till now been trying to cope with the unilateralist impulses of the U.S. It might now have to learn to deal with an imperial Presidency as well.

Democratic leader in House steps down

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, NOV. 7. After serving the House of Representatives for eight years as the leader of the Democrats, Richard Gephardt is stepping down from the post in what is the first major fallout of the Congressional elections of Nov. 5.

Mr. Gephardt's decision has not been made official but apparently he has informed party leaders of his intention of not wanting to seek a fifth term as House Minority Leader. But the Missouri lawmaker has been quite plain about the outcome of the Congressional elections to the Democrats. "We didn't get to the goal line.

We didn't score the touchdown. I'm sorry about that, but I'm proud of what I did... I've come to the conclusion that it's time for someone else to take a crack", Mr. Gephardt told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

He has long had ambitions to run for the White House and his intention to leave the post of Minority Leader could well be a part of that calculation.

Mr. Gephardt has been, on and off, in the fray for the party's nomination since 1988; but in 2000 set aside his personal ambitions to back the then Vice-President, Al Gore, and fully concentrate on getting Democratic control of the House.

Mr. Gephardt's decision to quit his current post does not mean that he is leaving the House.

But the move has clearly led to a scrambling of sorts within the party with at least two contenders right away making clear that they are after the job — Nancy Pelosi



BOWING OUT: The House Minority Leader, Richard Gephardt, in his Capitol Hill office on Tuesday. — AP

of California and Martin Frost of Texas, each making the "case" of their strengths and suitability for the post.

If Mr. Gephardt's move was one of the things many were talking about in the aftermath of Nov. 5, it is unclear how the Democratic leadership in the Senate is going to be affected. Senator Tom Daschle will soon have to relinquish his Majority Leader status, but there is no immediate pressure on him for the post of the Minority Leader. Like Mr. Gephardt, the Senate Democratic leader has been extremely disappointed over what happened on Tuesday,

when Republicans took full control of Congress. Meanwhile, senior aides to the President, George W. Bush, are quite delighted at the turn of events but apparently on instructions, are not in a bragging mode.

The advisors to the President are said to be getting down to business, working on major domestic and foreign policy challenges.

Mr. Bush's hands have been definitely strengthened in the aftermath of Nov. 5 and this will reflect more in the realm of domestic policies and appointments.

For instance, the President has been at loggerheads with Senate Democrats on the Homeland Security Department over workers' rights; and during the campaign trail in the last several weeks, Mr. Bush pointedly raised the issue of his judicial nominees getting nowhere in the Senate. This is now a different ballgame.

As regards foreign policy, the Republican victory does not mean that Mr. Bush's hands vis-a-vis Iraq is strengthened or that war with Saddam Hussein is now imminent. What Nov. 5 has done in a general way is to strengthen the hands of hawks in the Republican party and put pressure more on the internationalists within it.

The assumption that the Republicans with 51 seats in the Senate can do "anything" is quite exaggerated, and for two reasons: rules in that chamber being what they are, 60 Senators can block any legislation; and more important, the Grand Old Party knows the lessons of 1994 when arrogance of power handed the Democrats one more term at the White House in 1996.

WSG Republicans wrest HD-1 control of U.S. Senate 7/11

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, NOV. 6. In a stunning electoral outcome that has major ramifications for domestic and foreign policies, the Republican Party in the United States has defied historical trends and captured power on Capitol Hill.

The Grand Old Party (GOP) has retained control of the House of Representatives, perhaps increasing its strength by three, and wrested that of the Senate.

The Republicans not only successfully retained all the five open seats but also won at least two from the Democrats in Minnesota and Missouri. The only consolation for the Democrats is that they made inroads into the Republican gubernatorial strongholds of Pennsylvania, Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan.

The President's brother, Jebb Bush, after initial trouble in Florida, has won another term there as Governor, and the Democrats, after having the State House in Maryland for 36 years, saw Kathleen Kennedy Townsend defeated by the Republican, Robert Ehrlich. The GOP still has a majority of 20 Governorships out of the contested 36.

With two results yet to be accounted for — including the major toss-up of South Dakota — the GOP now has 50 seats in the Senate and claims majority status there.

The Republicans have also



George W. Bush

forced a Senate run-off election in Louisiana, which means that the Democratic Senator, Mary Landrieu, will have to face the final round on December 7.

Given the mess of November 2000, major networks have been hesitant to call the shots in the tight races of Minnesota and South Dakota.

The GOP withstood major Democratic onslaughts in Texas, New Hampshire and Colorado, winning all three States but lost in Arkansas. The Democrats also won in New Jersey, where the last minute candidate, Frank Lautenberg, made it comfortably.

The outcome of the Congressional elections must have proved satisfactory to the President, George Bush, who came to Washington two years ago under very unusual circumstances and more importantly without a solid political base.

But in the last five weeks, he has tried to give the impression of the "ultimate campaigner" by criss-crossing as many as 25 States, many of them several times, campaigning for candi-

dates who were on the verge of being defeated at the hustings.

Mr. Bush concentrated on the tough Senate races in a determination to not only hold on to what the GOP had but also to make critical gains to get control back from the Democrats. In many ways, he raised the stakes for himself for the Presidential elections of 2004.

The focus on Missouri paid off and the incumbent Democrat, Jean Carnahan, was defeated by the Republican candidate, Jim Talent. And the GOP went on to take Minnesota as well, where the last-minute Democratic substitute, Walter Mondale, failed to come through.

The Republican candidate, Norm Coleman, handpicked by the President, won by a squeaker. The surprise came in Georgia, where the Democratic Senator, Max Clelland, was defeated by the Republican lawmaker, Saxby Chambliss.

Mr. Bush, who returned to the White House after casting his vote in Texas, watched the results into the night and called winning GOP candidates. His advisers did not hesitate to credit Mr. Bush for the poll outcome.

"I think it is very fair to say that a good portion of the results and history being made is attributable to the President's popularity and his hard work on behalf of the candidates," the White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer, said.

Two Presidents' men at war

Tim Reid
The Times, London

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4 — President George Bush and former President Bill Clinton will today complete three days of rival campaign blitzes in an attempt to woo wavering voters on the eve of America's crucial mid-term elections.

The battle of the presidents was waged at competing campaign rallies in the American south.

Few in the White House need reminding, however, that Mr Clinton defeated Mr George Bush Senior in 1992.

The two men first descended on Florida, where Mr Jeb Bush, the President's brother, is in a close race to be re-elected Governor. Although the contest will have no impact on the Congress, it is perhaps the most important election for Democrats and Republicans.

Florida is vital to President Bush's hopes of re-election in 2004. A defeat for his brother would be a huge boost to Democrats.

After the state's controversial presidential vote count two years ago, which gave Mr Bush the presidency by 537 votes, Mr Clinton told a huge crowd in Miami on Saturday night: "If they took it from you once, don't give it to them twice."

After stops in Atlanta, Georgia and Tennessee, Mr Bush arrived in Tampa, where he countered under the city's Sun Dome: "For the sake of dignity and integrity in the office of Governor, send Mr Jeb Bush back to Tallahassee."

That appearance by the President was the beginning of a whirlwind three-day, ten-state campaign finale, underscoring the importance to the White House of tomorrow's (Tuesday) elections.

Voters in all 50 states will decide who controls the Congress. The Republicans need only a net gain of one Senate seat to retake the chamber, which they lost when the Vermont Senator Mr Jim Jeffords defected to the Democrats last year.

KENTUCKY WELCOMES PRESIDENT BUSH



WHISTLE-STOP: US President Mr George Bush addresses a Republican campaign rally at the International Convention Center at Louisville in Kentucky on Monday, a day ahead of the Congressional elections. — AFP

The Democrats need six seats to take control of the House of Representatives.

With American opinion split 50-50 between Republicans and Democrats, as it was two years ago, only a few hundred votes in half a dozen states will decide the control of Capitol Hill, and with it the fate of Mr Bush's political and legislative agenda.

Voter turnout, expected to be little more than 30 per cent in an election that has failed to capture the public imagination, is crucial. To rally black voters in his home state of Arkansas, where Democrat Mr Mark Pryor is fancied to unseat the Republican Mr Tim Hutchinson, Mr Clinton made an impassioned call to arms in the south of the state yesterday. Mr Bush will speak in northern Arkansas tomorrow.

Earlier, Mr Clinton travelled to Maryland to campaign for Ms Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Robert Kennedy's daughter, in her gubernatorial contest.

After stopping in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and South Dakota yesterday, the President will also visit the key state of Missouri today be-

fore spending the night at his Texas ranch. He returns to the White House tomorrow to monitor the results. The election is so close that the tiniest shift in voter mood could determine the outcome. There was some good news for Democrats yesterday. A Time/CNN poll found that a majority of Americans have doubts about trusting the President to solve the nation's domestic problems, and only 45 per cent trust him to manage the economy.

That comes after a poll by the Pew Research Centre which said that the fragile US economy, a strong point for the Democrats, was now much more important than Iraq or the War on Terror: 55 per cent want to hear candidates' views about the economy, only 7 per cent about their views on Iraq.

There was encouraging news, however, for the Republicans in Minnesota, another close Senate contest. The Republican challenger Mr Norm Coleman, having trailed the former Vice-President Mr Walter Mondale, was yesterday in a statistical tie, according to a local newspaper.

Is he Mr Hypocrite?

The Times, London

LITTLE ROCK (Arkansas), Nov. 4. — After all the campaign talk about the economy and Saddam Hussein, the question may well turn on this: the colourful private life of a Arkansas Senator.

One of the most vulnerable Republicans in the poll is Senator Mr Tim Hutchinson, who is locked in perhaps the closest, and most savage, race of these mid-term elections.

Three years ago he divorced his wife of 29 years and married former aide, Ms Randi Fredholm. It was a decision that strategists believe has probably scuppered Republican hopes of regaining control of the Senate.

Mr Hutchinson's deeply religious, conservative, gun-loving support base in a state won by President Bush in 2000 did not really mind his affair, or even the messy divorce that followed. After all, allegations of adultery and hanky-panky in high office did Mr Clinton no harm in Arkansas, which has one of the highest divorce rates in America.

Hutchinson voters see him as a hypocrite. Not only is he a graduate of Bob Jones University — a bastion of religious conservatism — and a former minister who won his Senate seat on a family values platform, but also he led the drive to impeach Mr Clinton for lying about his affair with Monica Lewinsky. Six months later Mr Hutchinson, who campaigns with a Bible in hand, had divorced his wife. He insists that his relationship with Ms Fredholm, his assistant in Washington, began after that. The people of Arkansas are sceptical.

US elections headed for a close finish

New York: Republicans and Democrats struggled to strike right themes to woo America's voters in the closing hours of campaign for what analysts predict would be an agonisingly close electoral battle on Tuesday, marked by lack of sharp divisions or clear-cut issues.

At stake are all 435 seats in the US House of Representatives, 34 of 100 seats in the Senate and 36 of 50 governorships. Analysts forecast Republicans would retain the majority in the House of Representatives and Democrats might increase their advantage slightly in the Senate.

Apparently heading opinion polls, Democrats sharply attacked the Bush administration for its "inability" to handle economy and warned voters of deterioration if the Republican White House is backed by a Republican House and a Republican Senate. They also told the elderly that they would suffer if the Bush administration gets unfettered support from the Congress.

But Republicans led by President George W. Bush, who toured sensitive states which are seeing close contests, spoke of his proposal of tax cuts that would put more money into the pockets of people as also on the need to enhance security at home and disarm Iraq even if it means use of force.

Of the 435 House seats, Republicans hold 223 and Democrats 208, with three vacancies. An Independent holds one seat. Thus Democrats would need a net gain of seven seats to capture the House. That, analysts say, is impossible task even as party leaders maintain they stand a good chance. In the Senate, Democrats had an advantage of one member, before the death of Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota.

Of the 36 governorships that are up for grabs, 23 are held by Republicans, 11 by Democrats and two are Independent in Minnesota and Maine.

The White House always prefers governors belonging to its own party

as they provide it with crucial support and, in the current case, would be very helpful to Mr Bush in his re-election campaign in 2004. At present, there are 27 Republican governors, 21 Democrats and two Independents.

Making economic slump an issue, House minority leader Richard Gephardt, Democrat, told a television programme that people have lost their jobs and pension in the stock market downturn and in major corporation going bankrupt in the wake of corporate scandals and are worried about their future. Republican national committee chairman Marc Racicot told NBC's "meet the press" that he was confident that his party could retake control of the Senate.

"But I think it's going to be incredibly close virtually everywhere."

But Democratic national committee chairman Terry McAuliffe said polls suggest his party is "knocking off incumbents all over the country."

In his election addresses, Presi-

dent Bush has been constantly referring to Iraq and warning the United Nations that the United States would lead a coalition of nations outside the world body to disarm President Saddam Hussein if it failed to adopt a tough resolution.

The reference to Iraq has generally been towards the end of Mr Bush's speeches, and his emphasis has been on economy which is picking up.

Mr Bush seemed eager to convey that he cares for the elderly who find it difficult to buy prescription medicines because of their cost, and above all about the security of the country.

He argued that to attain his goals, it is necessary to get full support from the Congress and that would be possible only if Republicans are voted to the House and the Senate.

A Republican Senate could make permanent last year's tax cuts, gain approval for judicial nominees and create a cabinet-level security department, he said at one of the campaign meetings. PTI

One suspect a war veteran

Two held in sniper hunt

BRIAN SNYDER

Frederick (Maryland), Oct. 24 (Reuters): Police arrested two men at a highway rest stop in rural Maryland today, in the first big break in a hunt for culprits in 10 sniper slayings which have traumatised the suburbs around the nation's capital.

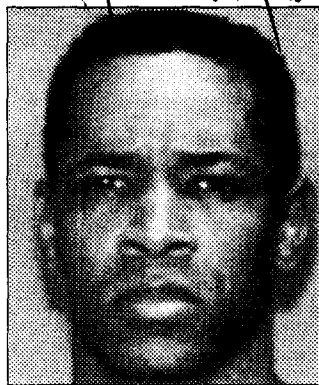
Authorities announced little beyond the arrest of "two individuals" found sleeping in a car.

Government sources identified one of the men as former US soldier John Allen Muhammad, a Gulf war veteran. Media reports said the other was John Lee Malvo, Muhammad's 17-year-old step-son.

"We got our guys," one investigator was quoted as saying by NBC-TV. Washington's WUSA-TV said the men "are considered suspects, according to our sources."

But a spokesman for Montgomery county, Maryland, said it was too soon to tie the pair definitively to the sniper killings. "People are jumping ahead. Give us time to do our job," he said, adding the two were being questioned in Rockville, Maryland, headquarters of the sniper task force.

A US government source said Muhammad served more than a decade in the armed services and was an Army mechanic in a combat support unit. "He was not a member of the elite ranger battalion at Fort Lewis (near Tacoma, Washington state) and



John Allen Muhammad, one of the two men arrested by the police in Maryland., (Reuters)

would not have received any sniper training such as that given to special forces troops," the official said.

Maryland state police spokesman Maj. Greg Shipley said a passing motorist had alerted authorities after noticing two men sleeping in a car that matched a description given out a few hours earlier by the task force investigating the seemingly random shootings which felled victims with just one bullet.

"Shortly after 3.30 this morning (0730 GMT), a tactical response team arrested two individuals from that vehicle who were sleeping in the vehicle who were taken into custody without incident," Shipley told a pre-dawn news conference

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THE TELEGRAPH

N-PROGRAMME / HECTIC PARLEYS ON

U.S. tells N. Korea to back down

By P. S. Suryanarayana

WS
By AS
NO-14

SINGAPORE, OCT. 19. The United States Under Secretary of State, John Bolton, and the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, James Kelly, on Saturday completed urgent talks with their Chinese interlocutors in Beijing on North Korea's recent disclosure of a clandestine nuclear weaponisation programme.

With the U.S. having linked nuclear weaponisation to that of terrorism in the case of Iraq, North Korea's "acknowledgment" has only added to the overall climate of a terrorism-alert in the Asia-Pacific region. The officials from the U.S. held the talks in South Korea in the context of Washington indicating its willingness to give diplomacy a chance for a peaceful resolution of the questions arising out of North Korea's admission of the clandestine programme. They are expected to travel to Japan as part of the Bush administration's "consultations" with the major regional powers on addressing the issue.

AP reports:

Mr. Kelly said the U.S. would bring "maximum international pressure" on North Korea, as a South Korean negotiator was visiting the communist state to urge it to abandon its nuclear

NO-14
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weapons programme or risk a confrontation with Washington. Mr. Kelly, however, said no deadline or time-table had been set. He stressed that the isolated, impoverished North's best way to resume dialogue with Washington to improve ties and win badly needed aid was to give up its newly revealed nuclear programme that violated a 1994 agreement with Washington. "The United States is focused now on consultations with friends and allies and we hope to bring maximum international pressure on North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons ambitions," Mr. Kelly said at a news conference in Seoul after meeting the South Korean Foreign Minister, Choi Sung-hong.

Mr. Kelly flew to Seoul early on Saturday from Beijing, where he and the U.S. Undersecretary of State, John Bolton, held two lengthy meetings with Chinese officials on the North's nuclear programme. "The Chinese made it very clear that they strongly oppose any nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula," Mr. Kelly said. In Washington on Thursday, the U.S. Secretary of Defence, Donald H. Rumsfeld, said he believed the North Koreans already have a "small number" of nuclear weapons. — AP

20 OCT 2002

ENDU

Iraq, a key issue in U.S. Congressional polls

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

MINNEAPOLIS, Oct. 12. It is back to politics and campaigning. With about three weeks to go for the crucial Congressional elections of November 5, the Democrats and Republicans are hoping that the political fortunes will swing in their favour. But the events of the last three weeks showed how suddenly the political environment could change.

Some time ago, the Democrats were hoping that when all the shouting is over on the Iraq front, they could confront the Republicans and the President, George W. Bush, with issues of domestic concern, the economy in particular, along with a raft of other real and local concerns like medicare, social security and education. But Iraq turned out to be the centre-piece of attention.

The Congressional Resolution authorising the President to use force, if necessary, against Iraq showed the Republicans pinning down the Democrats in an election year. No one could pretend that a national security issue like Iraq — especially as the White House made it out to be — could not be an election issue. And the solid

support of the Democrats in the Senate and the House of Representatives showed an attempt on the part of the leadership to come to grips with an issue that had not only immediate meaning by way of November 5, 2002, but also the Presidential election of 2004.

At least six top Democrats in the Senate — all but one seen as presidential hopefuls or potential candidates for 2004 — threw their weight behind Mr. Bush. Senators such as Tom Daschle, Joseph Lieberman, Joseph Biden, John Kerry, Evan Bayh and Hillary Clinton came out in support of the President. Mrs Clinton is the only one among them who may not run for president in 2004. Interestingly, in 1991 when the Senior George Bush had a solid international coalition to throw Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait, Mr. Biden, Mr. Kerry and Mr. Daschle voted against the Senate Resolution. And today, much of the Democrats' criticism has been over the hurry with which the present administration seems to be moving against Iraq and without much of an international backing.

The stakes for Nov. 5 are very high for the Republicans and the Democrats, for neither party can afford to sit back and take it easy. Deprived of their "majority,"

status in the Senate, the Republicans are looking for political vengeance; and at the same time are keen on maintaining their thin edge in the House of Representatives.

The Democrats are aware that full control of Capitol Hill by the Republicans would drastically alter the legislative agenda and with far reaching consequences. The Democrats are hoping that with Iraq now out of the way, the attention of the voters would turn to pocket book issues with the economy bouncing back as the main concern. In this scenario, the Democrats are seeing the possibility of weathering the storm in the close Senate fights and using the national momentum to advance in the House and get the majority status there.

A lot of focus is on the Senate races and one impression is that the Mid-West and the Plains are critical geographic areas that could determine which way Nov. 5 turns out.

And much of the Republican focus — which will bring Mr. Bush once again for a hectic round of campaigning — is in Minnesota and Missouri, the endangered Democrats being Senators Paul Wellstone and Jean Carnahan.

US House okays Iraq war

Washington, October 10

THE US House of Representatives on Thursday voted to grant President Bush the power he wants to launch a possible US military attack on Iraq, a step the Senate was expected to follow either later in the day or on Friday.

The Republican-led House endorsed a war-powers resolution, giving Bush the support he sought to confront Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, who the White House says possesses weapons of mass destruction that threaten the US and its allies.

The House voted 296-133 for the resolution that calls on Bush to pursue efforts

through the UN to disarm Iraq before resorting to war.

The Democratic-led Senate earlier voted 75-25 to clear the way for a final vote on the war-powers resolution negotiated by the White House and congressional leaders. It was expected to pass the resolution late on Thursday or on Friday.

House Majority Leader Richard Arme, a Texas Republican who backed the war-powers resolution after initial scepticism, said taking on Saddam was central to protecting the US in the war on terrorism.

"If you're going to conduct a war on terrorism then you must stop that person who is most likely and

most able to arm the terrorists with those things that will frighten us the most," Arme said. "A strike on Saddam is an integral part, a necessary part of the war on terrorism."

Democrats were split on the issue.

"I believe as a whole the resolution incorporates the key notion that we want to give diplomacy the best possible opportunity to resolve this conflict, but we're prepared to take further steps if necessary to protect our nation," said House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt, a Missouri Democrat who played a key role in negotiating the resolution's language with the White House.

But Rep Nancy Pelosi of California, who ranks second in the House Democratic leadership, said a possible war with Iraq could backfire by increasing terrorist activities and undermining the international coalition that Bush formed to fight terrorism.

"I say flat out that unilateral use of force without first exhausting every diplomatic remedy and other remedies, and making a case to the American people, will be harmful to our war on terrorism. We cannot let this coalition unravel," said Pelosi, who is the top Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee.

Reuters

THE NEW YORK TIMES

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NEW YORK TIMES

Congress delays Bush's war plans

Associated Press

WASHINGTON, Sept. 27. — Democratic accusations that President George W Bush is seeking a blank check for war with Iraq are slowing his drive for approval by Congress.

Trouble brewed for the administration at the UN as well. There, a tough resolution prepared by the USA and Britain to threaten Iraq faced stiff opposition from France, Russia and China, who hold veto power in the UN Security Council.

"We are a long way from getting an agreement, but we are working hard," the secretary of state, Mr Colin Powell, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday as he stepped up US diplomacy internationally.

On the home front, three Democratic senators — Mr Paul Sarbanes of Maryland, Mr John Kerry (Massachusetts) and Mr Russ Feingold (Wisconsin) — told Mr Powell the White House was asking Congress for unprecedented backing.

The senators did not question a need to get tough with Iraq for blocking UN weapons inspections for nearly four years and refusing to disarm. But they said the congressional resolution that the President pro-

posed was far too broad.

For instance, Mr Sarbanes said, it would authorise force against Iraq for refusing to return Kuwaiti prisoners held since the Gulf war.

Mr Kerry told Mr Powell: "You are asking for blanket authority," and Mr Feingold said: "We are hearing shifting justifications for using force in Iraq."

Mr Powell tried to placate them, saying the Bush administration was unlikely to use force except if Iraq continued to refuse to get rid of weapons of mass destruction.

The leader of the majority in the Senate, Mr Tom Daschle, said the Senate would begin its debate next week, but he said the White House proposal was unacceptable.

A resolution giving the President the authority to go to war should be backed by the broadest coalition possible, Mr Daschle said after meeting with Senate Democrats. "We have come some distance. We have got a long way to go before that can be achieved."

Senate Republicans said they strongly backed the proposal offered by the White House and felt Mr Bush had gone far enough in meeting Democratic concerns about its scope.

Voices for peace

BAGHDAD, Sept. 27. — Three US lawmakers arrived in Baghdad today, with one calling for a peaceful resolution to the Iraqi crisis. The three Democrat Senators are Mr David Bonior, Mr Jim McDermott and Mr Mike Thompson. Speaking to reporters here, Mr McDermott said: "We want every diplomatic effort made to resolve this (Iraqi crisis) without war which should be the last option." — AP

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THE STATESMAN

Pre-emption should be considered: Powell

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 27. The doctrine of pre-emption is only an elevation, not elimination, of the existing national security and military doctrines, the United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell, has said.

"There is no nation that should not have recourse to a line of thinking (pre-emption) when a threat is coming its way," Gen. Powell said at a hearing at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee here on Thursday. "It is inherent in the sovereignty to protect itself."

"We're looking at a national security strategy, at a strategy of dealing with threats that might be coming at the United States of America. And I believe it would be responsible for us not to consider the option of pre-emption or prevention... when

we see a real and present danger coming our way and we can do something about (it), why should not the President do something about it to protect the American people," he asked.

The Senator from Maryland, Paul Sarbanes, asked Gen. Powell if the United States could "unilaterally do something about it."

To which he said, "maybe it's unilaterally, maybe it's not unilateral."

The Senator persisted in asking if other nations also had recourse to the same line of thinking.

Gen. Powell said that had the U.S. spotted the Japanese fleet sailing into the Pearl Harbour (which was attacked during World War two), pre-emption would have been a "very sound policy."

Mr. Sarbanes seemed

unimpressed with Gen. Powell's response. "I don't find that analogy really on all fours," he said.

Gen. Powell, at various times, has said that the so-called doctrine of pre-emption that was being bandied about so much was really nothing new. Nor did it imply that existing doctrines such as containment and deterrence were being tossed out. The only difference was that pre-emption should perhaps be considered "more readily than we might (have) in the past."

The doctrine of pre-emption should be seen as an "elevation" of the many tools at the disposal of the United States, and not as one that excludes or eliminates existing tools of national security and military strategy, he said.

"I thank you for that explanation," remarked

Senator Joseph Biden, Committee Chairman, adding that the doctrine warranted some "legitimate discussion and debate" internationally.

"I know you don't want to set a precedent that allows India to say, by the way, Pakistan has done the following, we reserve the right to pre-emptively..." Mr. Biden said.

Gen. Powell did not respond.

"So I understand that. I've had lengthy discussions with Dr. Rice on this. I think this is not so much a departure although there are some who wish to make it sound like a gigantic departure. But we'll leave that for another day. I just want to make sure that anything I vote for is not premised upon the notion that this is a pre-emptive doctrine", Mr. Biden said.

SEP 2003

THE HINDU

U.S. Congress set to pass Iraq resolution

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

OTTAWA, SEPT. 20. The Congress of the United States is reacting favourably to the draft sent by the Bush White House in which the President would be authorised to "use all means necessary" including force to defend American national interests.

Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle are promising a quick vote on the Congressional Resolution and one indication is that it could come in about two weeks, or certainly before members adjourn in the first week of October for the November 5 elections.

"I am perfectly happy with the language", remarked Trent Lott, the Republican leader in the Senate.

The Majority Leader, Tom Daschle, stressed that while there was "absolutely no difference of opinion" on the threat posed by the Saddam Hussein regime, the Democrats were only seeking some changes to the language presented by the White House.

"The President is authorised to use all means that he determines to be appropriate, including force, in order to enforce the United Nations Security Council Resolutions, defend the national security interests of the United States against the threat posed by Iraq



A three-stage, solid-fuelled unarmed Minuteman III missile, launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base, in downtown San Bernardino, California, U.S., on Thursday. The test will track the missile's two unarmed re-entry vehicles as they travel to pre-determined targets at the Kwajalein Missile Range in the central Pacific Ocean. — AP

and restore peace and security in the region", the draft Resolution reads.

Some Democrats like Joseph Biden, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, have objected to the last section of the draft Resolution that refers to the U.S. restoring "peace and security in the region" wondering if the language suggests giving authority to this administration to get into other parts of West Asia or the Persian Gulf. But senior Republicans think otherwise. "It

looks pretty straightforward to me. It will pass overwhelmingly", remarked Jon McCain, Republican from Arizona.

The President, George W. Bush, is pushing for the Congressional Resolution and in the process bringing more pressure on the United Nations Security Council for a new Resolution on Iraq.

But there are no trade offs — the Bush administration seeks both: a new Resolution in the Security Council and a Congressional Resolution back

home authorising, among other things, the use of force. Washington is working hard to win over opponents in the Security Council, notably Russia. Mr. Bush is due to meet the Foreign and Defence Ministers of Russia on Friday.

Mr. Bush is keeping his tough line against Baghdad, dismissing its offer to admit weapons inspectors as "deceitful and deceptive". And the President once again reminded the United Nations that the U.S. is willing to act alone.

"If the United Nations Security Council won't deal with the problem, the United States and some of its friends will", Mr. Bush remarked.

The President also dismissed the latest Iraqi war of words against the U.S. The Iraqi Foreign Minister, Naji Sabri, accused the President of being a Jewish lackey and pushing for war against Iraq for the purpose of seizing its oil.

Mr. Bush said he was not aware of the speech, but did not pass up the opportunity to sharply rebuke Iraq.

"Let me guess. The United States is guilty, the world doesn't understand, we don't have weapons of mass destruction. It's the same old song and dance we've heard for 11 years", the President remarked.

Bush vows to defeat zealots

Associated Press

NEW YORK, Sept. 12. — With words of comfort and resolve, US President Mr George W Bush led Americans in remembering "a year of sorrow" since the 11 September terrorist attacks.

He vowed victory over "history's latest gang of fanatics."

In a televised address yesterday evening, President Bush thundered: "We will not relent until justice is done and our nation is secured. What our enemies have begun, we will finish."

"Now and in future, Americans will live as free people, not in fear, and never at the mercy of any foreign plot or power. This nation has defeated tyrants, liberated death camps and raised this lamp of liberty to every captive land," Mr Bush said.

"We have no intention of ignoring or appeasing history's latest gang of fanatics trying to murder their way to power. They are discovering, as others before them, the resolve of a great democracy."

The emotional return to New York was his final stop in a day-long tour of the three sites — a rebuilt Pentagon, a field of golden grass in Pennsylvania and the dusty, seven-story-deep hole where the trade center towers once soared.

Earlier, tears brimming in his eyes, President Bush lingered nearly two hours in the dirt where the footing of New York's World Trade Center's North tower once stood.

"We have seen the images so many times that they are seared on our souls, and remembering the horror, reimagining the terror, is hard

and painful," an emotional Mr Bush said. "For those who lost loved ones, it has been a year of sorrow, of empty places."

The US President did not mention the name of Mr Saddam Hussein, but officials said he had the Iraqi leader in mind when he said: "We will not allow any terrorist or tyrant to threaten civilisation with weapons of mass murder."

Before arriving in New York, the President laid a wreath in the Shanksville, Pennsylvania, field where United Airlines Flight 93 crashed, killing 40 passengers and crew.

"In every turn of this war, we will always remember how it began, and who fell first — the thousands who went to work, boarded a plane or reported to their post," Mr Bush said earlier at the Pentagon.

US, UK missions still on alert

HONG KONG, Sept. 12. — Asia breathed a sigh of relief today as 11 September passed without any major terrorist attacks, but security remained high with many US missions keeping their doors closed.

A bomb threat that forced the British embassy in Manila to be briefly evacuated highlighted the high state of alert in the region as US missions in Indonesia, Cambodia and Malaysia remained shut.

The Australia High Commission in Islamabad remained closed and the British mission in Singapore was out of bounds for the public. There were signs though that fears had eased slightly with UK missions in the capitals of Indonesia, Cambodia and Malaysia reopening, as did the Australian High Commission in Singapore. The US embassies in Islamabad and Hanoi resumed normal operations.

Philippine authorities said the bomb threat on the British embassy in Manila today was a hoax and staff at the mission's office in the city's Makati financial district were evacuated for two hours.

It was revealed yesterday that the USA had warned Southeast Asian nations of possible Al-Qaida attacks against US embassies. — AFP

America honours Ground Zero victims

New York, September 11

THE UNITED States, its forces on high alert at home and abroad, on Wednesday solemnly and tearfully remembered the traumatic day exactly one year ago when 19 young Arabs launched a carefully planned assault on America that killed 3,025 people.

On the anniversary of the September 11 attacks, virtually every town and city across the nation, every school and college, churches, synagogues and mosques as well as many factories and offices held ceremonies and observed a moment of silence for victims, young and old, from dozens of different nations.

On a glorious sunny day like the lovely morning of a year ago, bereaved family members, many clutching pictures of their loved ones, gathered with dignitaries,



Family members of a victim hold up a sign in her memory. REUTERS

police officers marching in formation and carrying flags, troops wearing combat fatigues, fire fighters, religious leaders and survivors at the strangely sterile hole in bustling lower Manhattan which used to be the site of the tallest skyscrapers in New York City

Bagpipers played a dirge and then fell silent and came to attention at 8:46 am (1246 GMT) — the moment the first plane hit the north tower of the World Trade Center, turning a late summer morning into an inferno, trapping thousands of people in a burning tomb

Bush vows to avenge attacks

PRESIDENT BUSH marked the September 11 anniversary on Wednesday by paying his respects to the people killed in the attacks and grimly vowing to avenge their deaths in the US war on terrorism.

Speaking at the Pentagon, after a hijacked plane gouged out a huge section of the limestone facade one year ago, Bush condemned the 19 Arab hijackers as merciless fanatics. "The murder of innocents cannot be explained, only endured. And though they died in tragedy, they did not die in vain," Bush said.

"Today, we remember each life. We rededicate this proud symbol. And we renew our commitment to win the war that began here."

Reuters, Washington

choking fog of destruction. The north tower collapsed exactly half an hour later.

Around the Pentagon, which was repaired at a cost of \$501 million, anti-aircraft missiles mounted on jeeps stood guard. Others were deployed around Washington DC. The US was on its second highest state of alert in response to suggested new attacks.

Reuters

Another solemn reminder soon followed near Shanksville, in the placid countryside of Pennsylvania, where a bell tolled 45 times for each person who died after refusing to allow hijackers to steer the plane they had commandeered to its presumed target in the capital. Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge, who was Governor of Pennsylvania this time last year, said the victims were true heroes who had probably saved many lives by their action.

The ceremonies were choreographed to echo the horrific unfolding of events a year ago. Bells tolled again in New York at 9:59 am, marking the moment when the south tower of the World Trade Center collapsed, sending a massive cloud of smoke, ash spiraling high into the sky, blanketing most of Manhattan in a

from which there would be no escape. A banner draped over the site, read: "We will never forget."

Accompanied by cellist Yo-Yo Ma playing a Bach partita, former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani began a reading of the names of each of the 2,801 victims

of the World Trade Center. The reading was interrupted by the tolling of bells at 9:03 am, marking the moment when the second plane struck the south tower.

Less than an hour later just outside Washington DC, ceremonies began at the Pentagon where 189 people



A day that changed America

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

NEW YORK, SEPT. 11. On a clear morning this day a year ago, terrorist hijackers crashed commercial jets into the World Trade Centre, a horrific and gruesome act that changed the face of not only America but the world as well.

The events of that day are still clear in the mind. For someone who had come to New York two days earlier on a routine assignment to the United Nations, the day literally started with a jolt — my wife called to ask if I had heard that a “small” plane had crashed into the World Trade Center. I turned on the TV only then to watch the horror unfold. And several minutes later, the walk towards the WTC was thwarted — law enforcement authorities were turning back people and my first impression was that the city was not going to be same. Telephones were not working. The lobby of the Manhattan hotel where I was staying was

packed with people who had nowhere else to go and nothing else to see but the giant television screen showing the horrifying images in not only New York but the crash at the Pentagon and the coming down of another commercial jet at Shanksville, Pennsylvania. With smoke billowing from the twin towers, a city that hardly goes to sleep showed signs of quiet from early evening on.

Coming to New York this September 10 from Washington was not much of an experience except that everyone was aware that 9/11 was around the corner. And with it the apprehension of another round of attacks, this time by terrorists who may not only want to “celebrate” but settle scores for a number of reasons. “Why is the media calling it an anniversary,” asked a cab driver on his way from La Guardia. “It is not as if something good happened. It was a tragedy,” making the point that this September 11 should be an “observance” of a terrible

thing that happened. In many ways, the cab driver did make a lot of sense. One thing is for sure — America will never ever be the same again. Save for a few rednecks, the vast majority of Americans did not go around the country “bashing” up people of foreign descent. Americans, for the most part, continue to believe that those 19 terrorist hijackers do not represent the foreign community by any stretch of imagination.

Still, there is an element of apprehension, which is visible, especially while travelling. And it is quite understandable, even if it is irritating at times. One year later in New York, the city appears to be back in business but the pain will never go away.

Officials are still counting exactly how many died in the attack on the twin towers. Close to a 3,000 died on September 11 in New York, Washington and Shanksville and they are said to have come from 36 different nations, including between 200 and 220 persons of Indian origin.



The U.S. President, George W. Bush, and Mrs. Bush join the White House staff in a moment of silence in Washington on Wednesday. — Reuters

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SEPT. 11 ANNIVERSARY / STATUS OF ALERT RAISED

Terrorist attacks likely, says U.S.

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

NEW YORK, SEPT. 11. Based on intelligence estimates and warnings, the Bush administration has raised the terror alert to "Code Orange", or the second highest level.

This has been based on warnings of possible strikes as the country observes the first anniversary of the horrific tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001. As many as a dozen embassies, consulates and other offices have been closed worldwide including in Indonesia and Malaysia even as officials are telling the people here to go about business as usual. But the Attorney General, John Ashcroft, warned that American intelligence agencies have concluded that "lower level" Al-Qaeda operatives may see today as a suitable time to come up with even small strikes. "Widely dispersed, unsophisticated strikes are possible", Mr. Ashcroft has warned.

The President, George W. Bush, who will be attending solemn ceremonies at the Pentagon in Virginia, Shanksville and New York during the course of the day, approved raising the terror alert to "Code Orange", which means "high danger".

This is the highest state of alert America has been put on since the system was put in place this March. "Americans need to go about their lives. They just need to know that their Government, at the Federal, State and local level, will be on an extra level of alert to protect us", Mr. Bush said.

The Vice-President, Dick Cheney, has been taken to a secret location with a view to protecting the Presidential line of suc-

cession in case of an attack. Mr. Cheney cancelled a scheduled speech on Tuesday night.

The Pentagon has several warplanes patrolling the skies of U.S. cities; and the Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, has ordered anti-aircraft missiles to be stationed in and around the Washington area as a "precaution".

Air patrolling of New York and Washington are on a 24-hour basis. The Director of Homeland Security, Tom Ridge, has said that every available Air Marshall would be pressed into service on commercial jets for the next several days. Police and law enforcement authorities in local places are urging people to report anything out of the ordinary.

The intelligence community is of the view that the likely targets at home and overseas are transportation and energy facilities, military facilities and national monuments.

Poignant scenes

With tears in their eyes, people from all walks of life in this country observed with great solemnity the one year observance of the terror attacks, and in the process, trying to come to terms with one of the most painful memories ever.

More than 3,000 persons died in New York, Virginia (outside Washington) and Shanksville, Pennsylvania when 19 terrorists hijacked commercial jets that fateful day last year and slammed them into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The fourth passenger jet went down in Shanks-

ville after passengers coming to know of what was happening elsewhere, took on the terrorists. All 40 passengers and crew died.

Till today, the possible destination of this passenger jet is still the subject of speculation — perhaps it was intended to be crashed on Capitol Hill or may be even the White House.

In New York, the reading of the names of those who perished in the Twin Towers continues with leading personalities such as the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, participating in the tearful event.

The President, Mr. George W. Bush, started his day with the First Lady at a private service in St. John's Church across the street from the White House; and observed a minute's silence in the South Lawn at exactly 8:46 a.m., the moment the first hijacked plane hit the World Trade Center. "The murder of innocents cannot be explained, only endured", Mr. Bush said in remarks at the Pentagon, where 184 persons lost their lives. "Though they died in tragedy, they did not die in vain", the President remarked.

Mr. Bush will be travelling to Shanksville and later on this afternoon to New York to participate in ceremonies.

Meanwhile, against the backdrop of heightened alert all across this country, a cargo container is being kept off some six miles off the coast of New Jersey after elements of radiation had been detected.

The Coast Guard, which inspected the vessel initially, believed that the ship was carrying illegal immigrants.

The war will continue: Bush

By Javed M Ansari

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 11. America commemorated the victims of the terrorist attacks on September 11 through observance ceremonies at the three main centres targeted last year. The day began at the Pentagon, the nerve-centre of the U.S. defence establishment, with the President, George Bush, the Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, and the entire top brass of the armed forces in attendance.

Though the ceremony was meant to be a commemorative event for the victims, Mr. Bush, riding the renewed wave of patriotism, pledged to continue the war against terror. "We will not give up, the war will continue, long and hard and in distant lands." Though he refrained from directly referring to Iraq, he left little room for ambiguity about the way he intends to move forward on Iraq. "As long as dictators and fascists continue to plot against (the U.S.), they will be stopped, not by their own conscience but by our armed forces." Mr. Bush's

strong words appeared to have struck a chord and he was repeatedly cheered everytime he spoke of the war on terror and his determination to "deal with the enemies" of America.

Mr. Bush appeared to have deliberately chosen the Pentagon to deliver the grim warning. It is the heart of the American defence establishment and symbolises the muscle and sinew of the U.S. military might.

Most observers believe Mr. Bush was yet again trying to underscore the seriousness of his intentions to go after Saddam Hussein. At the Pentagon, the authorities were taking no chances. In keeping with the unprecedented nationwide security blanket, the Pentagon resembled a virtual fortress. Fighter planes guarded the skies, and helicopters circled overhead. Batteries of high tech air defence missiles ringed the perimeter. Heavily armed security personnel patrolled the area.

A year ago, the Pentagon took a severe blow as the flight number 77 crashed into it.

THE HINDU

1 2 SEP 2002

Musical salute for the living and the dead

Washington/London, Sept 10 ^{11/9}

HOLLYWOOD STARS and musicians joined US President Bush and the first lady Laura Bush on Monday in a musical salute ahead of the first anniversary of the September 11 attacks.

The Bushes, accompanied by Secretary of State Colin Powell and his wife, sat in the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts presidential box for the performance, which will on air Wednesday evening on NBC.

The event was the second 'Concert for America'. The first was a Kennedy Center event 13 days after the 2001 attacks.

"Today we mourn the lost, honour the living and celebrate the character of our country and the creativity of our people," the President told the audience. Laura Bush was the honorary chairwoman of the event.

Three Tenors Placido Domingo performed alongside Latin pop star Enrique Iglesias and country music singer Alan Jackson in the musical tribute. Actors James Earl Jones and Angela Bassett did dramatic readings.

Singer Chris Isaak called the tribute a ceremony, like putting flowers on a grave. Singer and actress Reba McEntyre, singer Al Green and up and coming soul singer India. Arie also performed.

On the eve of the first anniversary of the September 11 attacks, film celebrities in Europe and America shared their memories and thoughts about the day.

"I was scared," said American actress and producer Goldie Hawn. "For the first time since the Cold War, when I was little and I would hide under tables when I'd hear the fire engine because I thought it was an air raid attack, I was scared. And I couldn't stop crying."

Hawn was so moved she decided to knit the Stars and Stripes: "I sat in front of the TV set and I knitted the American flag."

Spanish actor Antonio Banderas, at home in Los Angeles and sleepless, switched on his television to watch the news and heard that the World Trade Center's Twin Towers had been hit.



US Secretary of State Colin Powell joins two New York City policemen during the 'Concert for America 2002' in Washington DC. REUTERS

"I couldn't believe what I was watching, literally, it was almost like a movie," Banderas said. "Pretty much like the experience everybody had. And tremendous sadness and then immediately after thinking, what are going to be the consequences of this?"

Italian film legend Sophia Loren said at the Venice Film Festival: "We were horrified... the incredulity of what was happening live on television, (it) was really the most awful day of my life."

The thoughts of Mexican actress Salma Hayek, also at Venice, went to the more than 3,000 people who died that day. "There were a lot of people that lost people in this horrible incident and I think it was a time of collective sadness," she said.

British film director Sam Mendes said, "My memory of it was that I was there, in New York, and that it was something I'd rather forget. And you know all one feels is sadness."

Yoko Ono, musician, artist and widow of ex-Beatle John Lennon, said: "The September 11th situation really shocked all of us living in New York City and most of us are still in shock. But I think that somehow, we are coming together more and there is a kind of warm feeling in New

York City."

Many have looked for a positive side to the tragedy.

"For one moment in time it seemed that everybody put away their differences and came together as a people," said singer-turned-actor Jon Bon Jovi. "New York is still a melting pot. There's going to be Christians and Jews and Muslims."

Actor-comedian Robin Williams said, "My recollections are of a nation stunned and coming out of shock and gathering together as the most positive thing that has happened in a long time."

The attacks made those not affected "so unbelievably glad to be here," said British model and actress Liz Hurley.

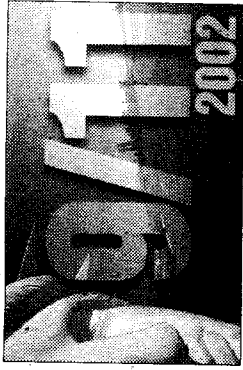
"We all appreciate what we've got a lot more and hopefully try to be nice in some ways," Hurley added. "It sort of revolutionised the ways a lot of us think."

Stephen Soderbergh, who directed *Erin Brockovich* and *Sex, Lies and Videotape*, said: "A year later we're still, in the States anyway, trying to figure out what our lives are going to be like or what the new version of a normal life is going to be like. I don't think the impact of it is over."

Reuters

US where it wants to be: on top, lonely

Very briefly, the new post-September 11 world order: the United States versus the rest. **GLENN KESSLER** reports



EARLIER this year, Secretary of State Colin Powell stood at an Air Force base outside Rome and, answering a reporter's question, explained how President Bush negotiates foreign policy differences with US allies. "He tries to persuade others why that is the correct position," Powell said. "When it does not work, then we will take the position we believe is correct." For many foreign officials, Powell's response epitomized the conduct of US foreign policy since the Sept 11 attacks: They believe the Bush administration, with its unyielding focus on the war on terrorism and the primacy of US interests, increasingly places little stock in the opinions of other nations. Administration officials, by contrast, see an envious world clamouring for attention from the only superpower, which they say has embarked on a dramatic effort to eliminate great power rivalries and usher in freedom around the globe.

"We've got influence, power, prestige and clout beyond any nation in the history of the world," Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said. "It brings forth a certain amount of envy."

The starkly different perspectives—the overseas view that the US has disengaged from the world and the American insistence that it has never been more engaged—demonstrate how the terrorist attacks have actually served to widen the gulf between the US and the rest of the globe. A brief flurry of support for the US after last September's attacks has evaporated because of what foreign officials consider a dismissive US attitude toward international treaties and coalitions, a tendency to view problems through the distorted lens of the war on terrorism, and confusing messages sent by a foreign policy team that often seems at war with itself.

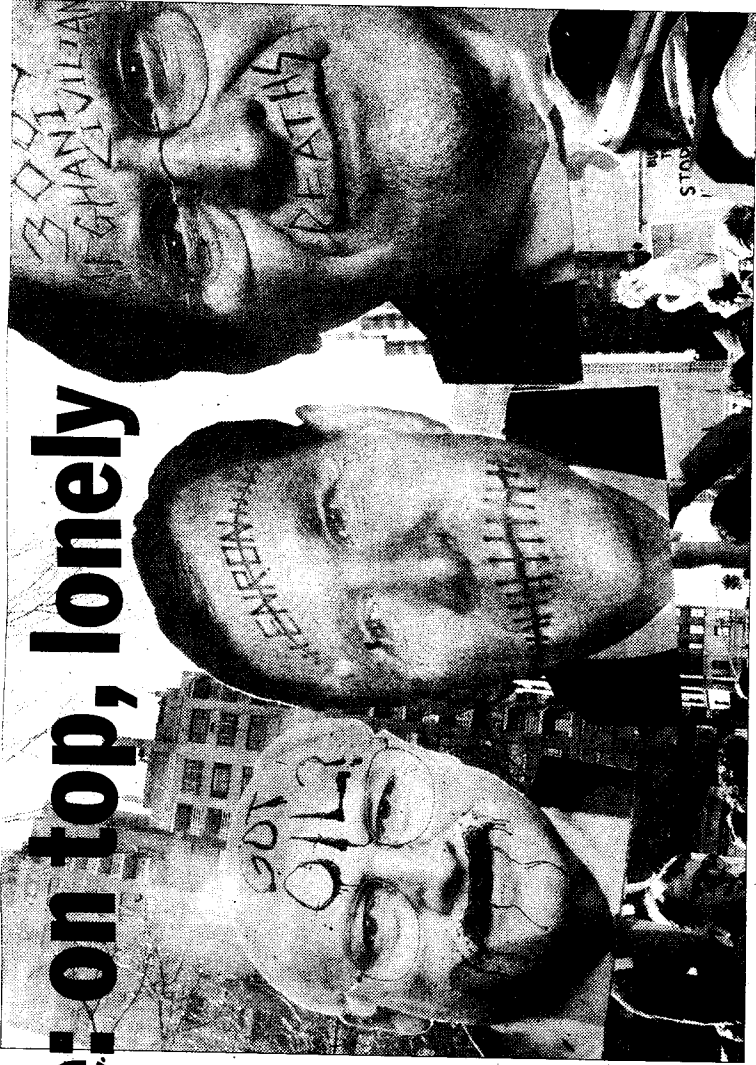
Problems considered important to the rest of the world—such as the threat of global warming, the costs of globalization and the spread of infectious diseases—appear to receive little if any attention from the administration, foreign officials complain. European officials say they feel adrift and increasingly estranged from US policy, especially on the Middle East and the environment.

Relations with several nations, Russia and China moved to strengthen ties with Washington through their assistance in the war, though this came at the expense of the administration plying down human rights abuses or anti-democratic practices.

The US has placed troops and formed ties in Central Asian states run by Soviet-era autocrats and bound ever closer with Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf even as he consolidates his grip on power he seized in a 1999 coup. And the rash of Palestinian suicide bombings in Israel has helped push Bush further in the Israeli camp.

ADMINISTRATION officials acknowledge there is a perception the US is pursuing its own goals at the expense of

Backing from Russia, Pak, China to the war against terror have come at the expense of the administration playing down human rights abuses or practices it criticises as anti-democratic



America's fierce campaign against an international court for war crimes and its rejection of a treaty to set targets to reduce global warming. Even Tony Blair is said to have told colleagues that he feels no real rapport with Bush

any nation besides Russia, and the overall US military budget of nearly \$400 billion is larger than the next 25 nations combined.

Jessica Matthews, president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, described Bush's vision of an international system run according to US interests and values as "the new Rome." But, she said, "My reading of history is it doesn't work.... History shows that being the most powerful nation means that others gang up on you."

THE perception that the US is acting with disregard for the consequences of its actions may have long-term consequences. In Asia, Bush's labeling of North Korea as part of an "axis of evil" is resented in South Korea as having undercut South Korean President Kim Dae Jung's engagement policies with the North.

Though officials in Washington regard the relationship with Russia as one of the brightest spots of post-Sept 11 diplomacy, the view from Moscow has begun to sour. Vladimir Putin dramatically reoriented Russian foreign policy to perhaps its strongest pro-American inclination ever, which culminated in Moscow's acceptance of Bush's decision to scrap the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. But Bush has not delivered on the economic tradeoffs that Putin was counting on, Russian officials say, and foreign investment has fallen 25% in the first six months of 2002.

(LA Times-Washington Post)

FROM the start of Bush's administration, but especially since Sept 11, the president's rhetoric and actions have shifted almost 180 degrees from the modesty and consultations he promised as a candidate. Bush assembled a foreign policy team notable for its experience, but also for its dominance by individuals who believe the US must set the agenda if other countries don't have the will or ability to confront the dangers the world faces. During the 2000 election, Bush said he would pursue a foreign policy that focused on maintaining respectful relations with important allies.

In June, Bush claimed the right to pre-emptively attack any nation the US deems a threat while at the same time suggesting the creation of an international system without great power rivalry—but dominated by the might of the US. "America has, and intends to keep, military strengths beyond challenge, thereby making the destabilizing arms races of other eras pointless, and limiting rivalries to trade and other pursuits of peace," Bush said. The value of Bush's proposed 15% increase in military spending—\$48 billion—is larger than the defense budget of

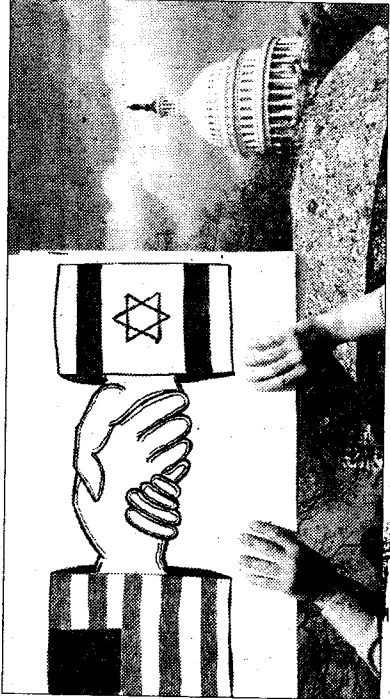
fierce campaign against an international court for war crimes, its rejection of a treaty to set targets to reduce global warming and its effective veto of an expansion of a biological weapons treaty had already strained ties.

Even British Prime Minister Tony Blair has told colleagues he feels no real rapport with Bush, said officials in London. The administration embarrassed Blair when it imposed steel tariffs that harmed British exports, and Blair has begun to pay a domestic price for administration actions in such areas as the Middle East, the environment and the International Criminal Court.

Post Sept-11 support for the US has now evaporated because of its dismissive attitude. In fact, Israel may be among the few nations that sees eye to eye with Bush's administration

broader international issues. Armitage conceded that "part of it is our fault," because "some of our rhetoric is less than edifying." Condoleezza Rice, Bush's national security adviser, also ticked off examples she felt demonstrated US engagement, such as easing tensions between India and Pakistan. "Sometimes it does appear that there is no issue in which people do not expect the United States to be involved," she said.

Still, the perception that the US has effectively disengaged from many parts of the world has broad implications, especially if the US tries to assemble support for a war against Iraq. The administration's



As Bush presses ahead on Iraq, Americans still remain way of moving too far from home

Travel world still spinning from impact

CINDY LOOSE & GARY LEE
WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 9

FOR a short while, America hunkered down. About this time one year ago, travellers desperate to get home were the only people wanting to board a plane. Footsteps echoed in nearly empty hotel lobbies. Schools issued travel bans. If you wanted to mingle with a crowd, your best bet was to head to Home Depot for nesting supplies.

Yet 2002

is on its way to being a record year for cruise lines, with 7.4 million passengers, according to Molly McPherson of the International Council of Cruise Lines. Hotel occupancy rates were down less than 1 per cent in July 2002, compared to the previous year. Despite the horror of

Sept. 11, 92 per cent as many people are flying now as before. In other words, it that means air traffic is down 8 per cent. That drop, and the low fares needed to woo passengers back, have meant catastrophic losses for airlines.

In fact, the entire travel world is still reeling one year later. It is as if the industry were a tourist shop snow globe shaken by a giant hand.

Some of the whirling pieces of fer glimpses of how Americans are adjusting to this new world of travel. Apparently, we are wary. Travel insurance sales jumped 75 per cent between January and July at Travel Guard, one of the leading travel insurance companies, said spokesman Dan McGinnity.

At the same time, tourism

in many large cities has failed to recover. Hotel occupancy rates in San Francisco, for example, dropped 20 per cent from 2001 to 2002. More of us want the kind of control we experience most vividly behind our own wheels. Rentals of recreational vehicles jumped 42 per cent in October 2001, compared with the year before; wholesale RV sales are up 30 per cent.

Meanwhile, Travel Centers of America has seen a 22 per cent increase in gasoline sales this summer compared with last. We are feeling patriotic. Even though visits to big national parks are down, visits to historic sites and cultural icons — such as battlefields and the Liberty Bell — are way up. We are resilient.

The student travel segment of the industry is among those rebounding quickly, said Mike Palmer of the Student and Youth Travel Association. Two-thirds of his association members said their sales were either equal to or better than



Residents of Dallas, Texas, put up messages for New York. Reuters

times by raising prices, from 10 per cent to as much as 40 per cent. Each segment of the giant travel industry has its own problems, and its unique response to what has been a shattering experience.

Here's a look at the state of some of the major sectors: Airlines: "Most airlines were already in the midst of a financial

disaster. Sept. 11 turned disaster into catastrophe," said consumer advocate David Stempler, head of the Air Travellers Association. None of the major airlines has fully restored cuts in staff and planes.

The disaster has also virtually silenced demands for better service. Groups clamouring for a Passenger Bill of Rights

51 jets remember victims in flight across America

NEW YORK: Fifty-one small planes, each representing a US state and bearing its flags, flew over ground zero to pay homage to the victims of September 11. The planes, which flew across the US in their "flight across America" took off from Fairfield Airdrome, New Jersey yesterday.

They flew down the Hudson river, passing close to the site of the felled Twin Towers of the World Trade Center. They went on to make a half-turn around the Statue of Liberty.

Aboard one plane, bearing the Union Flag, was Erik Lindbergh, the grandson of famous US aviator Charles A. Lindbergh who became the first person to cross the Atlantic in a single-engine plane.

The planes landed again at Fairfield, for the flags to be handed over to be carried by helicopter to the USS Intrepid, stationed on Hudson river. —AFP

have all but disappeared. In other words, the airlines were losing just as much money this summer as when 31 per cent fewer passengers were showing up to fly. For consumers, the financial squeeze has meant fewer flights from which to choose, and fewer services.

HOTELS: Bookings in major US cities picked up a bit this spring and summer, after sharp falls, but not enough to pull them out of the slump. Between July 2001 and July 2002, occupancy rates fell 20 per cent in San Francisco, 15 per cent in Boston and 11 per cent in Chicago, according to Smith Travel Research, which tracks the hotel industry nationwide.

CAR RENTALS: getting just the car you're looking for has become harder than ever, because stocks of vehicles kept by Hertz, Avis and the other major companies have been scaled back along with just about everything else in the travel industry. —LATWP

Autumn of terror, summer of discontent

The initial focus of the Bush administration when it launched its war against terror is dissolving into a foreign policy blur, says
ROBERT G KAISER

AMID the hoopla surrounding the anniversary of Sept 11, three questions seem apt: Why did the Bush administration veer off the course it set for itself a year ago, when President Bush promised to “rally the world” to fight a war against terrorism and then did so magnificently—but only for a while?

Why has the administration now chosen to neglect its friends as it pursues its enemies—or rather, the enemy most easily targeted, Saddam Hussein?

Why is the United States flirting with a new doctrine of pre-emptive war so radical it has no precedent in international law or American history—and why hasn't this flirtation provoked our politicians to conduct a serious national debate, first of all in Congress?

We're still too close to these events to see them all clearly, but it's not too soon to see that the Bush administration's initial sure-footedness has given way to a stumbling clumsiness. This has been a bad summer for American diplomacy. It isn't easy for the world's leading power to alarm all of its allies in a matter of months, but this is what the United States has done, for purposes that remain mysterious. The administration has accomplished this despite the successful beginning to the military campaign set off by the attacks on New York and Washington a year ago. Not only did President Bush rally allies on every continent to join an elaborate, efficient international coalition, but the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, used Sept 11 to finally abandon the pretense that Russia and America could revive their Cold War rivalry. He allied his country firmly with the United States, then with the NATO alliance.

Two Central Asian republics, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, former parts of the Soviet Union, welcomed US bases on their territory, creating a new geopolitical reality. No government on earth openly took the side of Al Qaeda. That first phase was triumphant. The anxiety of last fall that somehow America and its allies would be stymied in Afghanistan, as the Soviets were two decades earlier, now seems silly.

Routing Al Qaeda and its protector, the Taliban regime in Kabul, proved remarkably easy. Watching joyful Afghans dancing in the streets was a joyful experience. The first phase has cost more than \$30 billion and 51 American lives, but the initial mission was accomplished: no more Taliban, no more safe haven for al-Qaeda.

But the campaign stalled in early December, when American commanders decided not to send

US troops into the mountains around Tora Bora, and Osama bin Laden escaped—at least that was the conclusion of American intelligence. Since then the war hasn't gone very well. Key al Qaeda leaders remain at large, presumably including bin Laden, though he may be dead. With or without him, our enemy can still operate. A new UN study concludes that “al-Qaeda is by all accounts ‘fit and well’ and poised to strike again at its leisure.”

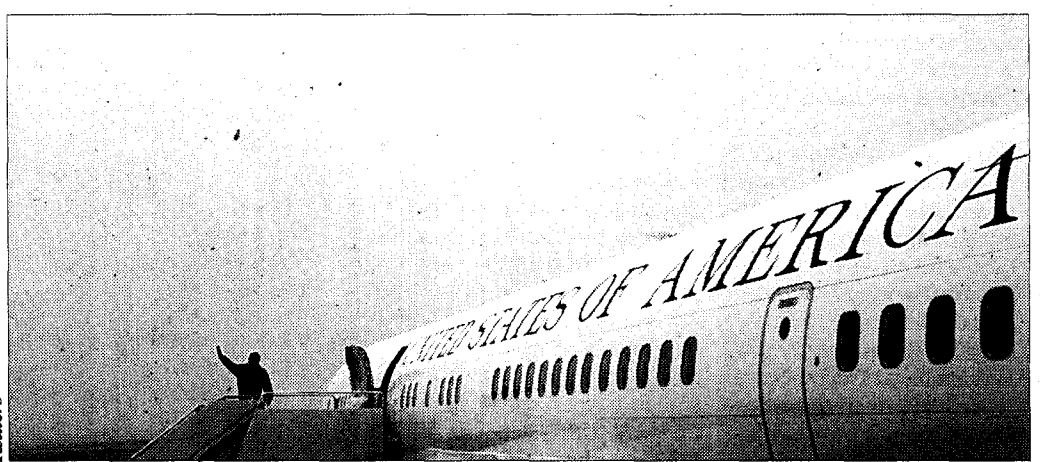
It is sobering to consider how much we still don't know about al Qaeda. German investigators have apparently established that the Sept 11 plot was hatched in Hamburg in a cell led by Mohammed Atta, pilot of one of the planes that hit the World Trade Center. Who was Atta's superior? Unknown. Who in al

of the United Nations.

The Americans questioned in this poll demonstrated a lack of enthusiasm for this administration's foreign policies, a warning in an election year. Only 20% of Americans favoured invading Iraq without the support of our allies and the United Nations. On question after question, large majorities preferred acting with allies to acting alone.

But public opinion hasn't yet been a factor, because the country hasn't had a debate about its global status. The United States became the only great power a dozen years ago, but we have never really confronted the implications of this fact. Our political class has largely taken a bye on the biggest questions of our time: How should the United States relate to

Why is the US flirting with a new doctrine of pre-emptive war so radical it has no precedent in international law or American history—and why hasn't this flirtation provoked American politicians to conduct a serious national debate? It isn't easy for the world's leading power to alarm all of its allies in a matter of months, but this is what the United States has done, for purposes that remain mysterious



The issue isn't whether or not to fight terrorism. The United States became the only great power a dozen years ago, but Americans never really confronted its implications. Our political class has largely taken a bye on the biggest questions of our time: How should the US relate to other countries? On what terms should we engage with the rest of the world? Has preemptive war become acceptable?

Qaeda's hierarchy helped plan the attack, or approved it? Unknown. What was bin Laden's personal role? Unknown. What did the plot's authors hope would be its result—what are their strategic goals, if any?

In a democracy, voters want to participate. In a community of nations, governments want to participate. The issue isn't whether or not to fight terrorism—a new poll of Europeans and American released last week showed strong support for military action against terrorists. But the same poll showed equally strong sentiment that any such action should be taken in concert with allies, and with the support

other countries, and to international institutions? On what terms should we engage with the rest of the world? With what kind of armed forces? And what sort of diplomacy? Has preemptive war become acceptable?

The attacks of Sept 11 announced a profound change in the world. They set us on a new course. But our politicians have let us down by failing to engage the country in a great discussion of the huge questions we face. On Wednesday, when we mark the anniversary of the horror of last Sept 11, we still won't know where we are going, or why.

(LA Times-Washington Post)

Bush to garner Congress support against Iraq

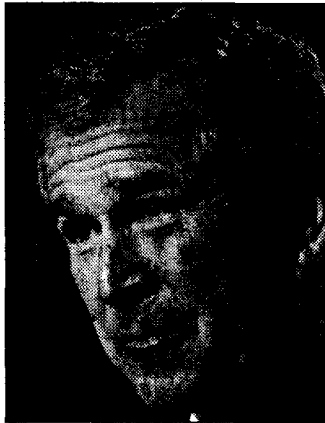
Desikan Thirunarayanapuram
in Washington

Sept. 4. — As speculation about US war planning grows, the administration of President George W Bush has been working overtime to gather support both at home and internationally for use of force to oust the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq.

In one such effort to round up support, the President will meet with congressional leaders at the White House today — a day after he returned from a month-long working vacation at his Texas ranch — to discuss US plans to remove Mr Hussein. Top Republican and Democratic leaders of the House of Representatives and the Senate will meet the President in the morning.

While the hawkish tone of the statements by Mr Bush's top cabinet colleagues indicates the administration is preparing for an attack on Baghdad, the President's aides have said he hasn't decided on the course of action and that he would consult allied nations and congressional leaders before he decides. In this respect, Wednesday's meeting is seen as a step in that direction.

Congress has been divided on the idea of using force to make Mr Hussein comply with the UN



Bush: Increasingly hawkish

resolutions that call for the return of weapons inspectors who were thrown out of Iraq in 1998. Some leaders, especially Democrats, are of the opinion that Washington has to explore the avenue of the United Nations to the fullest before using force — a view also believed to be shared by Secretary of State Gen. Colin Powell.

While some administration officials have indicated that it would suffice if the President only informs congressional leaders about the plans, many in Congress say the administration will have to get a congressional resolution authorising war.

The meeting with congressional leaders is expected to clarify all these questions, especially on the

weapons inspections.

Gen. Powell, in a partial transcript of an interview with the BBC released this week, said Washington should first work with the UN to get the weapons inspectors back. However, Defence Secretary Mr Donald Rumsfeld and Vice-President Mr Dick Cheney have said it would be a futile exercise. Mr Cheney has said the issue is larger than the inspections — the ultimate US target is a "regime change" in Iraq.

Yesterday, Mr Rumsfeld offered to provide more evidence to Congress to back up the claim that Iraq has been trying to acquire or develop weapons of mass destruction. He said the information could be released during congressional hearings this month.

"What the President wants to do, and will do, in his own time, is to provide information he feels is important with respect to any judgment he decides to make," Mr Rumsfeld said.

He said USA wants Iraq to let UN weapons inspectors return without conditions. And White House spokesman Mr Ari Fleischer has said the return of inspectors is only a "first step" and the real issue is whether Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction.

THE STATESMAN

L 5 SEP 2001

Powell's future in doubt after Iraq mix-up

Roland Watson,
The Times, London

WASHINGTON, Sept. 3. — Renewed doubts about Gen Colin Powell's political future are threatening to hamper attempts by President Bush to clarify US intentions against Iraq. Mr Bush was under increasing pressure yesterday to spell out his Administration's policy towards President Saddam Hussein after the Secretary of State contradicted Mr Dick Cheney, the Vice-President.

Gen Powell told the BBC that the return of UN weapons inspectors to Iraq should be the "first step", days after Mr Cheney had insisted that such a move would provide "no assurance whatsoever".

Mr Lawrence Eagleburger, Secretary of State to the first President Bush, said that the public rifts were damaging US credibility abroad. "I would suggest to this Administration that it would be a good idea if they would get their act together," said Mr Eagleburger, who has warned Mr Bush against a unilateral attack on Baghdad.

The wrangle over US efforts to oust Saddam has been muddied by reports that Gen Powell

will quit the Bush team at the end of the President's first term. In a carefully worded leak to *Time* magazine, a Powell aide said that the Secretary of State would consider four years' service enough.

The leak, which stopped short of blaming frustrations or tensions over policy, was not the first time that the prospect of Gen Powell excusing himself from a second Bush term has been aired. The timing, however, could disrupt Washington's efforts to win round allies over ousting Saddam.

For many months the main complaint from US allies has been that they feel unable to take Gen Powell and other State Department officials at their word because they appear to be a marginal voice, often overturned, in an Administration of aggressive hawks.

The unnamed Powell aide may have been firing a coded shot across the White House bows, forcing Bush officials to contemplate life without the Administration member most respected abroad and more popular than the President at home, and so seeking to increase Gen Powell's leverage in the coming weeks.

However, the comments increased the perception that he is out of step with the rest of the Administration, and could damage efforts by the USA to persuade its sceptical allies that it is united in its determination and policy towards Iraq.

Mr Peter Struck, the German defence minister, said yesterday that Gen Powell's views on how to approach Iraq made him an odd man out among Mr Bush's key officials. "It can be concluded without doubt that Powell is isolated in the President's top advising team," Mr Struck said.

It is a measure of the General's peculiar position at the Bush top table that some commentators across the political spectrum would celebrate a Powell resignation well before 2004. Many on the Right believe his cautious pragmatism has no place in the Administration, and those on the Left would cheer what they regarded as a principled stand.

Gen Powell's background suggests, however, a man more likely to try to win his way behind the scenes. A career military officer and team player, he has well-honed political skills, having served the Reagan, first Bush and Clinton presidencies.

Diamonds and a new axis at Aznar wedding

MADRID, Sept. 3. — There will be no cake but the Blairs, the Berlusconi and the Borbons will be present at the Escorial Monastery in the Sierra de Madrid on Thursday when Mr Jose Maria Aznar, the Spanish prime minister, gives away his only daughter. Ana, a 21-year-old psychology student, is to marry Mr Alejandro Agag (31), her father's former personal secretary and an apparatchik in the ruling Popular Party who has just landed a plum job with a Portuguese bank.

The invitation list will not have escaped Brussels' attention. Is the presence of Mr Tony Blair and Mr Silvio Berlusconi, the Italian prime minister, new evidence of a European alignment to rival the Franco-German axis? Or is it simply the case that the Blairs and the Aznars get on famously and that Berlusconi is an *amigo intimo* of the groom?

The leaders of Portugal and El Salvador will al-

so be among more than a thousand guests, chief among whom will be King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia of Spain. Spain's elites, including soccer supremos, top fashion models, writers, and businessmen will be there. Finally, Julio Iglesias, will sing at the reception. But, Mr Felipe Gonzalez, Spain's long-serving socialist leader who was unseated by Mr Senor Aznar in 1996 is not invited.

After Mr Alejandro Agag slips a £12,000 diamond ring onto Ana's finger and the ceremony is complete a simple dinner will be served at the nearby Los Arcos del Real, a horse breeding centre adapted for the occasion.

The meal, to be prepared by the famous Madrid restaurateur Jose Luis, will be simple, in line with the Mr Aznars' eating habits — a cold starter of lobster salad followed by partridge and a pudding. There will be no wedding cake because, according to Jose Luis, it is passe. — The Times, London

Americans turn their backs on Iraq attack

Sept. 2. — Support for a US ground invasion of Iraq has declined rapidly in the USA during the past few months with nearly half of all Americans opposed to such a strike.

A *Time* magazine/CNN opinion poll released yesterday showed that support for sending US troops to oust President Saddam Hussein of Iraq fell dramatically from 73 per cent last December to just 51 per cent last month.

The poll showed that, while most Americans agreed with the Bush Administration's arguments that the USA would be morally justified in invading Iraq, almost half (49 per cent) believed it would lead to a long and costly war. One in seven believed the USA would eventually be forced to withdraw from Iraq without a victory.

President Bush's own standing among the American people has also fallen. He is now less popular in the polls than the former Mayor of New York, Mr Rudolph Giuliani. On foreign policy specifically, Mr Bush's approval ratings fell from 64 per cent in July to 56 per cent last month, according to the *Time* poll.

The decline in support for an Iraq invasion was bad news for the White House where serious splits emerged within the Administration over the weekend on the Iraq question.

The insistence of Gen Colin Powell, Secretary of State, that Washington wanted a return of

weapons inspectors to be the "first step" in solving the crisis appeared to contradict Vice-President Dick Cheney, who said last week there was little point in getting inspectors to go back into Iraq.

"The world has to be presented with the information, with the intelligence that is available," he said, in remarks that suggested the USA will present a dossier against Saddam.

A Times, London report by Katty Kay in Washington, Melissa Kite in Maputo and Philip Webster in London

In an interview with BBC1's Breakfast with Frost programme Mr Powell seemed to be going some way to meeting concerns voiced by Mr Tony Blair in a telephonic conversation with Mr Bush last Thursday. During the lengthy chat Mr Blair appealed to Mr Bush to do as much as possible to bring the international coalition back on board. Mr Blair has no intention of weakening his support for the USA. Sources said he did not want to box Mr Bush in by demanding a new UN resolution, although if one emerged that the USA could support he

would welcome it.

Mr Blair's case — which he is expected to amplify at a press conference in his Sedgefield constituency tomorrow — is that America has much to gain from trying to get the weapons inspectors back in.

Reports that General Powell is planning to leave the Administration in 2004 at the end of Mr Bush's first term were a further indication of tension in the White House. Sources close to General Powell told this week's edition of *Time* magazine that the dovish Secretary was increasingly frustrated with having to fight the hawks in the Administration.

Meanwhile, US military planners expressed concern that a strike against Iraq could drain attention and resources from the war on terror and risked making the USA vulnerable to more terrorist attacks.

Pentagon officials warned that a major campaign in the Middle East could place a serious burden on intelligence gathering and Special Forces units which are two key components of the war against Al-Qaida in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"I'd prefer later than sooner," a senior military official told the *Washington Post* on condition of anonymity. "Can you imagine how it would look if we go to war against Iraq and there's another terrorist attack in the USA at the same time? People will wonder what we're doing."

DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGE

Bush looks vulnerable on the home front

PRESIDENT Bush has been wearing something of a halo since 11 September, some would say unfairly — so far, he hasn't prosecuted the war against terror with any extraordinary degree of distinction. Victory in the Afghan campaign — with the hi-tech US military against the mediaeval and unpopular Taliban — was a foregone conclusion, but Osama bin Laden was allowed to get away along with the majority of the Al Qaida and Taliban leadership. Moreover, one doesn't know whether the US-supported Hamid Karzai will be able to win the peace, with reconstruction and stabilisation efforts faltering and the Taliban seemingly able to reorganise in certain parts of Afghanistan. Secondly, the Bush administration appears to be moving rapidly in the direction of an invasion of Iraq. Iraqi forces may not, however, be pushovers like the Taliban, and allies on the ground, comparable to the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan, may prove difficult to find as a decade of sanctions has in all probability turned the Iraqi populace against the West, Kurds in northern Iraq excepted. If Iraq turns into another Vietnam, that would spell the formal demise of the war against terror.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Democrats are finally acquiring the gumption to challenge Bush — Terry McAuliffe, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, has charged that Bush is cynically exploiting 9/11 for the purpose of upcoming congressional elections. Aiding the Democrats in the elections will be revelations of mammoth financial scandals and a Wall Street in free fall; it may behove Bush to remember the slogan with which Bill Clinton once toppled his father: "it's the economy, stupid". The economy is doing poorly under Bush with net job creation almost zero and the Federal Reserve Board warning of an extended slowdown.

With the \$1.3 trillion tax cut to mainly benefit the rich, Bush has succeeded in transforming a \$127 billion budget surplus into a \$165 billion deficit in less than a year. In addition, whopping handouts have gone to the military since 9/11. An Iraq invasion would be ruinously expensive and further batter an already weak economy — unlike the Gulf War, the US will be going in with few allies and nobody else can be expected to bankroll the war effort. All these factors, however, may not acquire political salience before November, when congressional elections are scheduled — Bush is unlikely to mount an Iraq invasion before that date. Which means 9/11 may still see Republicans through to a good performance in November, although a tightly contested election is likely. It may be a different story, however, when Bush comes up for re-election in 2004.

Questions for Bush over Harken

Tim Reid, Abigail Rayner
The Times, London

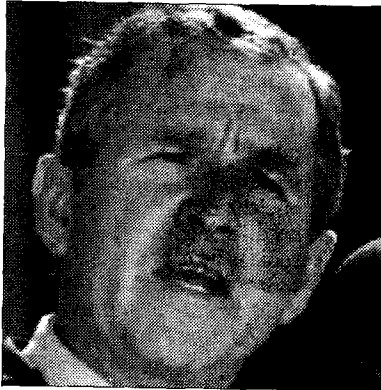
NEW YORK, Aug. 2. — President Bush and Vice-President Cheney faced further allegations yesterday related to their past business dealings that raised questions regarding the White House's ability to appear sincere in its censure of corporate abuses.

The latest controversy to confront the President over his time as a director of Harken Energy Corporation, the Texas-based oil company, centred on the creation of offshore tax havens by US companies, which Mr Bush has said he opposes. It emerged that Harken, on whose board of directors Mr Bush served between 1986 and 1993, had established a subsidiary in the Cayman Islands. This would have protected taxable profits derived from offshore oil drilling operations that Harken was starting near Bahrain.

The President was confronted with the Harken tax-avoidance scheme a day after signing legislation that

established ^{Str. 3} stricter ³¹⁸ accounting standards for US companies.

Democrats on Capitol Hill and an increasing number of Republicans, are trying to prevent companies from



Mr George W Bush

setting up token headquarters offshore while retaining most of their operations and jobs in the USA.

When asked about the issue, Mr Bush told reporters: "I think we ought to look at people who are trying to avoid US taxes as a problem. I think

American companies ought to pay taxes here, and be good citizens."

Asked about Harken's Cayman subsidiary, Mr Bush said he had opposed an "arrangement with Bahrain, a drilling venture there".

The President, who in 1990 sold dollars 800,000 (pounds 513,000) of Harken stock 16 days after learning that the company was about to report large losses, has been under increasing pressure over his actions at Harken. He was cleared of insider-trading by a 1991 Securities and Exchange Commission inquiry but a recent opinion poll found that more than half of Americans think that the President is hiding facts about his time at the oil company.

The White House countered that no oil was produced in the Bahrain venture, so tax avoidance was a "moot point". Mr Cheney is facing an investigation by the commission over the millions he made when he sold shares in Halliburton, his former energy company. New documents have raised concerns about the acquisition of the firm in 1998.

7 AUG 2002

THE STATESMAN

Bush & Cheney did not practise what they preach

ADAMENTOUS

Washington, Aug. 1 (Reuters): In a practice now criticised by the White House and Republicans, US President George W. Bush and Vice-President Dick Cheney served in leadership positions at companies that set up subsidiaries in offshore tax havens, according to documents and an analysis of company records released yesterday.

Democrats said revelations of offshore subsidiaries created by Harken Energy Corp while Bush served as a director and Halliburton Co while Cheney was chief executive offered new evidence that the President and the Vice-President failed to practice the corporate policies they now preach.

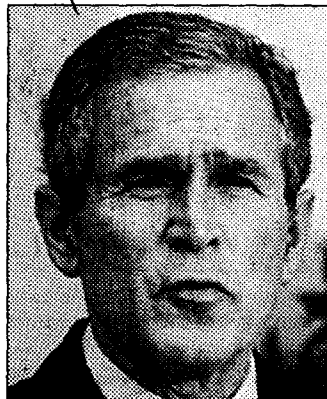
The White House, in response to a wave of accounting scandals at major US corporations, has railed against the practice of setting up subsidiaries in tax havens like the Cayman Islands and Bermuda to sidestep disclosure rules and avoid paying US taxes.

Bush called it "a problem" and said, "We ought to look at people who are trying to avoid US taxes."

The Democrat-led Senate voted yesterday to deny lucrative defence contracts to US companies that incorporated offshore this year to avoid taxes. US companies incorporated offshore hold at least \$2 billion in federal contracts, including defence contracts.

Lawmakers said the collapse of energy giant Enron Corp underscored the need to crack down on corporate offshore activities.

The Houston-based energy trader had hundreds of sub-



George W. Bush (left) and Dick Cheney

sidaries in tax-haven countries, which critics said it used to avoid taxes.

While Bush served on Harken Energy's board of directors in 1989, the company set up an offshore subsidiary in the Cayman Islands, the White House acknowledged.

But spokesman Ari Fleischer denied it was a scheme to avoid paying taxes in the United States.

"If it is true, I think it gets harder and harder to take his position on corporate accountability seriously," Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota said of Bush.

Halliburton, which Cheney ran before becoming Vice-President, was even more aggressive in its use of offshore tax havens, according to an analysis of company filings with the Securities and Exchange Committee by Citizen Works, a non-partisan group founded by consumer advocate Ralph Nader.

The number of Halliburton subsidiaries incorporated in offshore tax havens rose from 9 to 44 while Cheney served as chief ex-

ecutive between 1995 and 2000 the group said. The analysis was distributed by congressional Democrats, who hoped to use it to their political advantage in the November elections.

Democrats have seized on the Harken transactions and Cheney's tenure at Halliburton to paint the Bush administration and its Republican allies in Congress as compromised by insider deals and close business connections.

Cheney's spokeswoman, Jennifer Millerwise, had no comment on Halliburton's offshore subsidiaries and other business practices.

2 AUG 2002

THE TELEGRAPH

Uneasy on Iraq, US Cong seeks details

LATWP

WASHINGTON, JULY 31

SENIOR members of Congress from both parties say they support President Bush's goal of overthrowing Saddam Hussein, but they're beginning to question the thoroughness of the administration's preparations for a potential confrontation with the Iraqi leader.

Leaders on Capitol Hill, citing skepticism from abroad and differences within the administration, are pressing the administration to deliver a convincing assessment of the threats posed by Saddam, the risks presented by a military invasion and the demands on the United States in Iraq in the aftermath.

"You can't just drop the 82nd Airborne into Baghdad and it will all be over," said Sen Chuck Hagel, R-Neb, a Foreign Relations Committee member who has reservations about a military assault. The committee opens two days of hearings on Wednesday on Iraq, US policy making and Saddam's access to weapons of mass destruction. Committee Chairman Joseph Biden, said today he would be "very, very surprised" if the administration moved against Saddam before next year.

Asserting that he doesn't want to force the hand of the White House, he said he believes Bush is "nowhere near making the decision as to when and how."

No administration officials

were summoned, he added, when the White House made clear that it wasn't prepared to offer public testimony until September at the earliest.

A number of congressional leaders, including Biden and House International Affairs Committee Chairman Henry Hyde, R-Ill, said they expect Bush to seek a formal congressional support for any military action against Iraq.

Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld reiterated on Tuesday that the administration has made no decision to use force against Saddam. Bush has said there are no invasion plans "on my desk," but military planners and others in the government are developing proposals for a possible invasion and occupation.

1 AUG 2002

INDIAN EXPRESS

WSO
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Bush to sign Corporate Fraud Bill

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 30. All eyes are on the market this morning as the U.S. President, George W Bush, is signing a bill on Corporate Fraud in an elaborate ceremony at the White House.

"I'm signing a good Bill. It's a Bill overwhelmingly embraced by Republicans and Democrats that says loud and clear to corporate America: We expect you to be responsible for the shareholders and your employees. And if you're not, we're going to investigate you, arrest you and prosecute you", Mr. Bush said at a Republican fund raiser in South Carolina on Monday.

Law-makers in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, quite mindful of the Congressional elections this November 5, sent to the President a Bill that comes down hard on corporate fraud after a string of scandals that not only put the common person on the streets but also rattle the markets on Wall Street.

Amid all the goings on politically and on the foreign policy front, the Bush administration has come under attack for being soft on business houses and its leaders against a backdrop of a raft of high profile bankrupt-

cies. With the markets reacting adversely to what is happening, the administration is trying to impress upon the fact that the fundamentals are strong and there is indeed a solid foundation for long term growth.

The legislation to get tough on corporate fraud came about after House Republicans agreed to a tougher Democratic version from the Senate.

But Democrats still hope to make the point, and for election purposes, that the bill is not tough enough. At least two dozen law-makers will be at the White House for the signing ceremony.

And no corporate Chief Executive Officers have been invited with the exception of the Chairman of the New York Stock Exchange.

The Bill that Mr. Bush signs brings about criminal penalties and prison terms for corporate fraud and document shredding; restrictions have been imposed on accounting firms that are also in the consulting business, Executives will have to sign off for accuracy for their companies' accounts and an independent board with power to issue subpoena will oversee the accounting industry.



An Enron employee sits with her belongings outside the energy company's building in Houston after the company laid off thousands of employees in the wake of its bankruptcy filing, in this file photo.

Divide between Bush, Powell on policies growing

Washington: After a recent



Colin Powell

meeting, secretary of state Colin Powell was kidding around with the secretaries in the national security adviser's White House office, complaining that their pretzel jar was empty. Then he said: "Okay, that's enough. I've got to get back to work now— and by the way, I'm not resigning."

The staff "all took a slight, shallow breath and then broke up", a senior administration official recalled. But the question of Mr Powell's tenure is no laughing matter in Washington these days.

A string of internal policy differences and defeats—most recently on West Asia and international family planning— have set off speculation from the Pentagon to Foggy Bottom that Mr Powell might not last through President Bush's term. Tension with the White House and Pentagon hawks that Mr Powell has long sought to minimise are no longer possible to disguise.

In public, Mr Powell, the four-star-general-turned-diplomat, has done what he always does: soldier on, shaping his commander's policies as best as he can from within, with some success. In private, Mr Powell, an amateur automotive mechanic, complains that old friends spend too much

time sympathetically taking his temperature —"dip-sticking me", as he puts it.

"He's not easily defeated," said Marybel Batjer, a former longtime aide who is now chief of staff to Governor Kenny Guinn of Nevada and still in close touch. "He just isn't. It's not within his constitution to be eaten up or gobbled up by negatives." But she acknowledged, "Frankly, this is hard. His good weeks come with a lot of damn work."

With the possible exception of the moment in the mid-'70s when Henry Kissinger was both secretary of state and national security adviser, internal tensions and threatened resignations over foreign policy have been more the rule than the exception in the White House. But veteran diplomats say the current disagreements are the worst since the days when Mr Powell's mentor, defence secretary Caspar Weinberger, feuded with secretary of state George Shultz in the Reagan administration.

Almost from the beginning, he has found himself at odds with many of his more hardline colleagues and the President himself on the handling of foreign policy, whether over Mr Bush's rejection of the Kyoto treaty on global warming, the President's lumping of Iran, Iraq and North Korea into a global "axis of evil", or the President's declaration last month that progress towards West Asia peace depended on Yasser Arafat's replacement as Palestinian leader. NYT News Service

WorldCom gets \$2 bn lifeline

Reuters
PHILADELPHIA, 23 JULY

A day after filing the world's largest corporate bankruptcy, WorldCom Inc yesterday got court approval for \$2 billion in funding to keep operating during a reorganization that, if successful, could erase more than 75 per cent of its debt.

WorldCom, the no. 2 US long-distance telephone and data services company, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection on Sunday, brought down by a \$3.85 billion accounting scandal and a mountain of junk-rated debt. The bankruptcy does not include its international operations.

The Clinton, Mississippi-based company, which transmits half of the world's Internet traffic, plans to hire a restructuring expert to aid its current management team. It aims to emerge intact from Chapter 11 in about nine to 12 months with less than a quarter of its \$30 billion debt load.

"The reorganisation here is not going to be a liquidation," WorldCom chief executive John Sidgmore said at a press conference in New York. "I think our



plan is going to be to keep the company intact."

President George W Bush said he was "very concerned" about the impact of WorldCom's bankruptcy on workers, investors, and the economy, and urged Congress to crack down on unethical corporate conduct, a White House spokesman said yesterday.

On Wall Street, the blue-chip Dow average fell below 8,000 for the first time since mid-October 1998, pushed lower by an 11 per

cent decline in Citigroup Inc, which was among the leading lenders to WorldCom and collapsed energy trader Enron Corp.

Last month, WorldCom disclosed it improperly recorded \$3.85 billion in expenses and fired former chief financial officer Scott Sullivan, who it alleged orchestrated the accounting debacle. The company, which is reviewing its books as far back as 1999, said it did not expect to release its second-quarter earnings on July 25 as previously scheduled.

Clients examine possible effects on service levels

Christopher Grimes
NEW YORK, 23 JULY

SOME OF WorldCom's largest customers, including the US government, are examining their relationships with the telecommunications carrier to determine if its bankruptcy will damage its ability to prevent service outages.

However, few of its largest clients appear to have begun the complex task of switching to WorldCom rivals such as AT&T. John Sidgmore, WorldCom's chief executive, said yesterday that the group had not lost any large customers, though he acknowledged that many customers had expressed concern about WorldCom's ability to continue providing services.

WorldCom's infrastructure is estimated to handle about 70 per cent of the e-mail traffic in the US.

(Financial Times)

U.S. House panel approves security plan

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JULY 20. A Select Committee of the House of Representatives on Homeland Security has approved the President's version of a new department that will protect the United States from terror attacks. But it was a strict party line vote with five Republicans in favour of the measure and four Democrats against it.

Next week, the full 435-member House will take up the bill. Unless major concessions are made to placate lawmakers, the measure will be in trouble.

Under the scheme of things approved by the Select Committee, there will be a Homeland Security Department that will incorporate many agencies now in other departments such as the Secret Service, the Border Patrol and the Coast Guard.

The Cabinet level department will have an employee strength of 170,000 and a first year budget of \$38 billions. This is what the

President, George W. Bush, wanted.

Democrats on the Committee argued that the bargaining rights of the workers in the proposed department would have to be ensured, besides insisting on taking out a provision that would limit the liabilities of companies making anti-terrorism products.

The Democrats also disagreed with an amendment to the bill that effectively extended the time-frame for the screening of all baggage from the end of this year to the end of 2003.

The consensus has been that given the existing airport infrastructures and the availability of baggage screening machines, the deadline on the mandatory screening of all baggage could not be met.

The Homeland Security Bill that cleared the Select Committee has indeed a long way to go and it is not known if the Cabinet Department will be in place by the time of the first anniversary of the terror attacks on

America — Sept. 11.

The White House, backed by Capitol Hill, wants to make this deadline; but the differences on provisions and language is something that the House of Representatives will have to factor in first.

Second, the Senate will have to come out with its version; and finally, the House and the Senate will have to reconcile the differences before taking it to a final vote in the respective chambers. By far, the toughest problem is not about the new Cabinet Department *per se*, but about what agencies will be included in the new department.

Several committees in the House which are looking into aspects of the Homeland Security Department have felt that agencies such as the Coast Guard and the Secret Service and the Federal Emergency Management must be kept out of the new department.

The Republican leadership in the House has refused to oblige.

Bush unveils scheme for defence of homeland

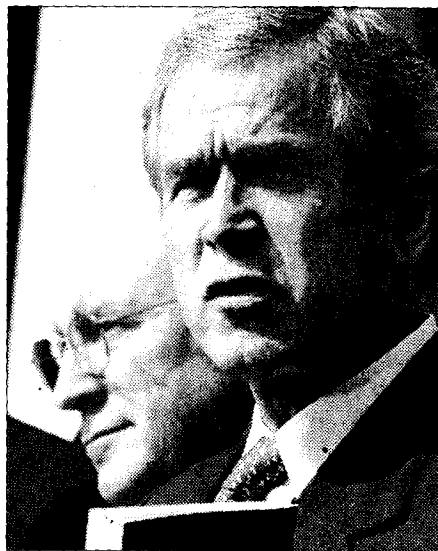
Tim Reid, *The Times*, London

WASHINGTON, July 17. — President Bush unveiled his long-awaited strategy to protect America from terrorism yesterday — a 71-page blueprint that includes controversial proposals to let the US army impose quarantines during a biological attack, and the use of thumbprint and eyeball scanning for foreign visitors.

America's first National Homeland Security Strategy, eight months in the making, calls for sweeping new powers for the federal government, new extradition and secrecy laws, the stockpiling of newly developed anti-terror vaccines, and creation of federal "red teams" that would dream up ways of attacking US targets to expose the nation's weak points. The initiative, announced by the President in the White House Rose Garden, also calls for federal security features on state driving licenses and increased inspection of the 16 million shipping containers that enter US ports annually.

"Protecting Americans from attack is our most urgent national priority and we must act on that," Mr Bush declared. The plan, parts of which faces a stormy reception in Congress, relies heavily on science and technology to help prevent "a new wave of terrorism" in the USA, including "catastrophic threats" of nuclear attack, radiological "dirty" bombs, and biological and chemical weapons.

The White House is calling for research on new vaccines, creation of "biometric"



President Bush holds up a copy of the blueprint for Homeland Security, while Vice-President Dick Cheney stands next to him, at the White House on Tuesday. — AFP

travel documents for foreigners that contain scans of physical features and development of screening tools to predict human behaviour. It calls for greatly expanded use of sensors to detect nuclear and radiological devices at borders, ports and main highways.

It also calls for thorough inventory of the country's critical infrastructure, including highways, pipelines, agriculture, the Internet and energy plants, and a plan to protect it.

The document begins with an acknowledgment of the difficulty of defining terrorism. "Terrorism is not so much a system of belief ... as it is a means of attack."

Until yesterday senior Pentagon officials, including Donald Rumsfeld, the defence secretary, had repeatedly denied that they planned to ask Congress to overturn, or bypass, the 1878 Posse Comitatus Act, a fundamental piece of legislation that sharply restricts the military's ability to participate in domestic law enforcement. But the Administration now argues for a "thorough review" of the law — an initiative that will add to the problems the security strategy faces in Congress. Already, the key to implementing the plan — the proposed department of homeland security, hastily announced last month after the exposure of intelligence lapses before September 11 — has faced congressional opposition. Last week a series of congressional committees essentially rewrote the plan for the new department, voting not to place the Coast Guard, the secret service and a large part of the immigration service under its auspices.

Tom Ridge, the newly-appointed homeland security director who developed the strategy, said yesterday that US troops might ringfence cities in the event of a chemical or biological attack, but that "rules of engagement" needed to be established.

None of this comes cheap. Estimates put the cost of homeland security at more than \$100 billion (£ 70 billion) a year.

78 JUL 2002

THE STATESMAN

Bush treats corporate symptom, not rot

FROM RANDALL MIKKELSEN

New York, July 9 (Reuters): US President George W. Bush today sought to boost criminal penalties for corporate abuses and beef up the federal securities watchdog in his response to accounting scandals that have shaken investor confidence and threatened to become a political liability.

"We must usher in a new era of integrity in corporate America," Bush said in a speech delivered to Wall Street leaders. The measures such as longer maximum prison terms aim at

cracking down on individual abusers rather than overhauling the underlying system of corporate regulation. Democrats said Bush failed to go far enough, and called for measures such as provisions for corporate whistleblower.

"So far the administration's approach has been a familiar strategy. Use harsh rhetoric to condemn wrongdoers while delaying and watering down whatever reforms might come out of Congress," said House of Representatives Democratic leader Richard Gephardt of Missouri. US share prices traded slight-

ly lower after the speech. Bush said corporate misdeeds were threatening workers and investors. "At this moment, America's greatest economic need is higher ethical standards — standards enforced by strict laws and upheld by responsible business leaders," he said.

The president is seeking to double to 10 years prison terms for mail and wire fraud charges frequently used in cases of corporate fraud. He also would strengthen laws against document shredding and other forms of obstruction of justice — issues that have come up in con-

nection with bankrupt Houston-based energy trader Enron Corp.

Bush proposed a new \$100 million increase in the Securities and Exchange Commission budget for fiscal 2003 to hire more investigators and buy equipment. This comes on top of \$20 million sought earlier this year, but is well below the \$338 million SEC funding increase being pushed by some members of both parties in Congress.

The proposals were tougher than steps the president announced in March after the accounting scandal at Enron shook US stock markets and they ap-

peared to reflect the fear that voters could punish Bush and his Republican party in the November 5 midterm elections.

On Capitol Hill, Democratic congressional aides said Bush's proposal had elements in common with Vermont Democratic Sen. Patrick Leahy's proposal to create a broader definition of corporate fraud, but did not go far enough.

The White House and the SEC have been criticised by Democrats and some conservatives for moving too slowly to take on the scandals at Enron, telecommunications company World-

Com Inc. and other firms that have driven US stock prices sharply lower in recent weeks.

While Bush's call for doubling the maximum prison terms for mail and wire fraud would require legislative action, many of his proposals today relied on self-policing by companies. The White House appeared to be seeking a balance between reassuring investors with govern-

ment action to stop corporate misdeeds while avoiding a thorough overhaul of US securities laws that companies would resist and, officials said, could itself spook the markets.



George W. Bush

LA airport gunman an Egyptian

On the toes
all the time

Tel Aviv, July 5 (Reuters): Highly-trained El Al security marshals, all veterans of Israeli combat units, are the first and last line of defence in the national airline's constant vigil against attack.

The El Al guards who stopped dead an Egyptian gunman's shooting spree at Los Angeles International Airport yesterday acted according to a security doctrine developed over decades of pro-Palestinian gun and grenade attacks, as well as hijackings.

Seconds after Hesham Mohamed Hadayet set upon passengers at the El Al check-in desk with two pistols and a hunting knife, Israeli media said, an unarmed sky marshal waiting to board the flight to Tel Aviv tackled him, sustaining stab wounds.

The airline's local security chief, who was armed, then ran up and shot the Egyptian national dead. Such quick responses under fire are requisite to the job. "Our guys are veterans of top army units, and undergo training akin to that of the Shin Bet," a former member of the shadowy Israeli domestic security agency said.

El Al officials voiced satisfaction today at the resolution to the Los Angeles shooting.

"The Israeli security units entrusted with guarding El Al flights acted according to regulations and thus prevented a graver attack," company director-general Amos Shapira told reporters at Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion Airport.

FROM JILL SERJEANT

Los Angeles, July 5 (Reuters): US authorities today identified the man who opened fire and killed two people at the ticket counter of Israel's El Al airlines at Los Angeles International Airport as a 41-year-old Egyptian native.

The attack, swiftly denounced by Israel as "terrorism," sowed panic and confusion as Americans marked the first Independence Day anniversary since the September 11 attacks.

Three people, including the gunman, were left dead and five were injured in the attack, which Israeli officials said bore all the signs of a terror attack, but which the FBI and police initially said appeared to be "an isolated incident."

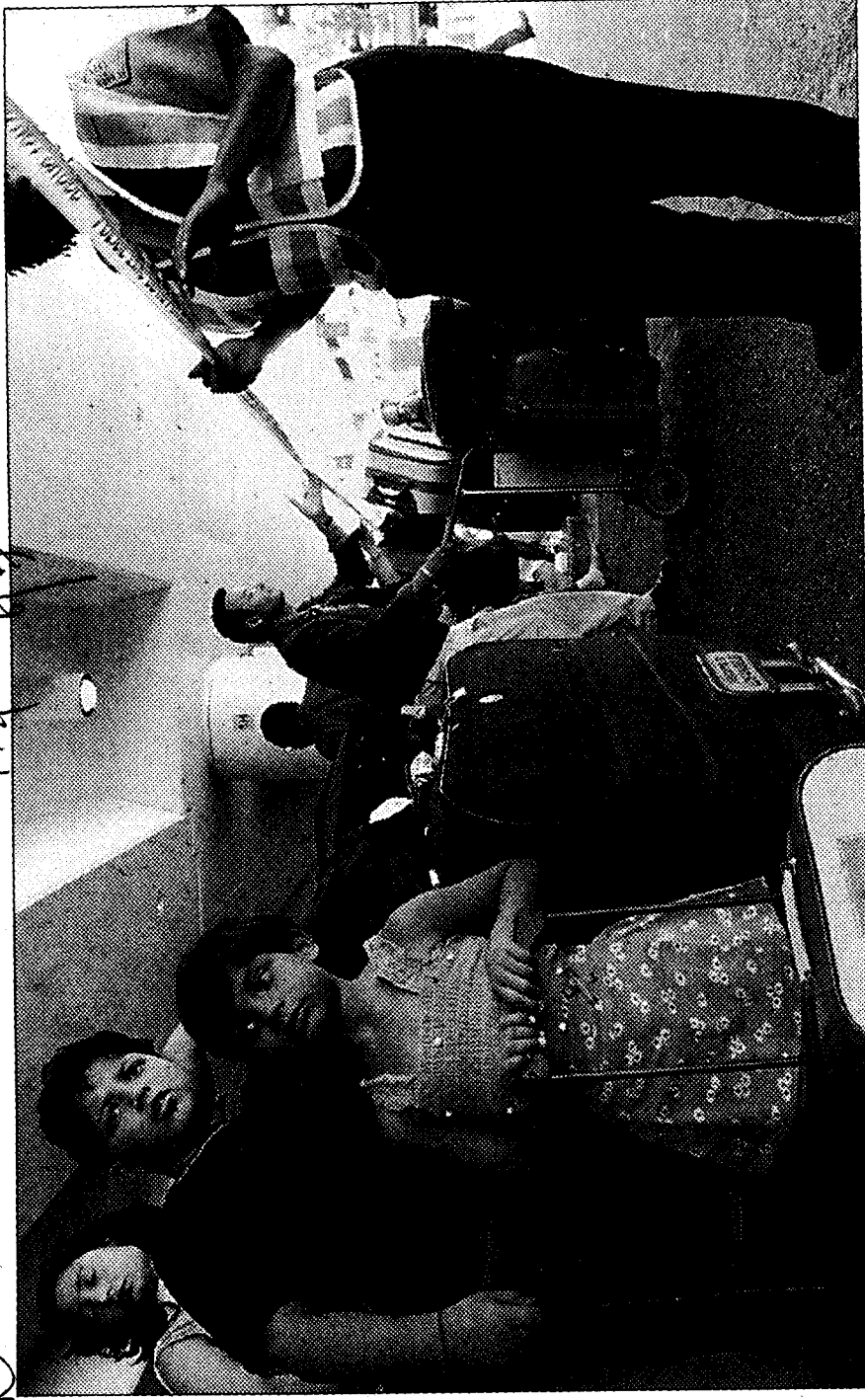
The FBI issued a photo to television stations of a man they said was the shooter. They identified him as Hesham Mohamed Hadayet, 41, an Egyptian native and resident of the United States since 1992.

FBI sources said he was married with a child and had been living in an apartment complex in the city of Irvine, about 50 miles south of the airport. He was said to have two drivers' licenses, one of them stating his birthday as July 4.

The mayor of Los Angeles, James Hahn, said today that the gunman appeared to be acting alone.

"We certainly don't have information yet though to make him part of any conspiracy. It does appear to be something that only involved him," Hahn said on NBC's *Today* show. "We do think it is an isolated incident, but the matter is still under investigation."

Asked if Hadayet was a man



Kupish Haldia (second from left), 10, and his sister Nancy (third from left), 5, emerge from the international terminal of the Los Angeles Airport on Thursday after a gunman opened fire near the El Al airlines ticket counter. (AFP)

with a grudge, Hahn said. "We don't know yet. To the victims it really doesn't matter. It's an act of terrorism any time someone takes a gun into an airport."

The FBI had spent yesterday saying there was no indication of a terrorist connection in the mid-morning airport shooting. But officials held back from announcing definite conclusions.

"I am not sure whether this confirms there was a terrorist connection," FBI spokesman

Matt McLaughlin told reporters, who said evidence so far unearthed suggested the attack could be characterized as "a hate crime" under US law.

"There is a possibility that this may have been a terrorist act, but we don't want to jump to conclusions," McLaughlin added, saying Hadayet was not on an FBI watch list.

The assailant was identified on the basis of information found in his car at an airport

parking lot some eight hours after yesterday's attack. US authorities had spent hours trying to pin down the gunman's identity and motive.

Israeli officials swiftly denounced the shooting, which sent screaming passengers at the world's third busiest airport diving to the floor and taking shelter behind counters.

"It seems like terrorism. It looks like terrorism," Israel's consul general in Los Angeles,

Yuval Rotem, told a news conference yesterday. "The way it was conducted was very much similar to previous attacks at El Al counters throughout European countries. And therefore given this history we presume that it may be, and would appear to be, a terrorist attack," Rotem said.

FBI agent Ron Iden told a news conference earlier that the assailant was carrying .45 calibre and 9mm handguns and a knife when he opened fire.

Bush rolls up sleeves, spits fire

FROM MARSHAD MOHAMMED

Ripley (West Virginia), July 4 (Reuters): US President George W. Bush today called on Americans to cherish their liberties on July 4 and vowed to use the nation's "overwhelming power in the defence of freedom" around the world.

Speaking in Ripley, West Virginia's flag-draped town square, Bush also rejected a federal court ruling barring references to God in the Pledge of Allegiance, telling the cheering crowd that "no authority of government can ever prevent an American from pledging allegiance to this one nation under God."

Marking Independence Day in Ripley — population 3,400 — Bush exhorted Americans to celebrate despite worries about attacks after September 11, pledged to wage his war on ter-

rorism relentlessly and promoted a local Republican congresswoman — Rep. Shelley Moore Capito — in a tough re-election race.

"The anniversary of America's independence is a day for gratitude, and a day for celebration," Bush, standing in front of the red, white and blue draped Jackson County Courthouse, told a few thousand people packed into town's main square.

Speaking of the war on terrorism that the United States launched after the September 11 attacks, Bush said: "Once again, history has called America to use our overwhelming power in the defense of freedom. And we'll do just that."

The flag-waving crowd chanted "USA, USA, USA" as Bush, who doffed his jacket and tie and rolled up his sleeves, strode onto a small stage and they enthusias-

tically recited the Pledge of Allegiance with him, shouting out the words "under God."

The US 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco — one of the most liberal in the nation and whose decisions are often overturned — ruled last month that the words "under God," added to the pledge by Congress in 1954, violated the constitutional principle of separation of church and state.

Bush, who frequently refers to his own strong sense of faith and who carefully cultivates the Christian conservatives who helped him narrowly win the White House, drew some of his loudest cheers today when he supported the phrase.

Before the president arrived, a local preacher — the Rev. Jack Miller of the West Ripley Baptist Church — gave a prayer blasting liberal causes, including abortion rights.



President George W. Bush pledges allegiance to the US flag in Ripley, West Virginia, on Thursday. (Reuters)

5 JUL 2002

THE TELEGRAPH

For two hours, Cheney becomes US President

Washington, June 29

PRESIDENT GEORGE W Bush transferred powers of the Presidency to Vice-President Dick Cheney for more than two hours today while under sedation for a routine colon screening.

The test revealed no polyps or other abnormalities, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said in a statement after Bush became just the second President to invoke the constitution's succession-of-powers clause.

"The President says he feels great and will resume his normal routine at Camp David," Fleischer said after the 20-minute procedure conducted by a team of military doctors at the Presidential retreat in Maryland's Catoctin mountains.

At 7:09 am, Bush temporarily transferred the powers of the Presidency with a signed letter to the leaders of the House and Senate under Section 3 of the 25th Amendment.



George Bush
Health check

Twenty minutes later, after anesthesia was administered, the procedure was completed. Bush resumed powers two hours and 15 minutes after Cheney became acting president.

Cheney was at the White House this morning as part of his normal work routine, including a briefing.

Bush, who turns 56 next week, said doctors had recommended the procedure after two benign polyps were

found during two previous colonoscopies — one in July 1998 and the other in December 1999.

The colon screening is considered a standard preventive procedure for men Bush's age. The President is a fitness advocate who runs 3 miles (5 km) a day, neither drinks nor smokes and has prodded out-of-shape Americans to follow his example by exercising more and eating less junk food.

"This is part of the annual physical so I just decided to do it at this time," he said. "It fit in with my schedule." Bush said he decided to transfer power to Cheney to be "super cautious" because the country is engaged in a war on terrorism.

White House Counsel Al Gonzales said Cheney had assumed the duties of the office "for a matter of hours."

The only other time this had been done was in July 1985 when President Ronald Reagan underwent surgery for colon cancer, he added.

Reuters/

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

30 JUN 2002

Problem of Bush!

Unacceptable security policy

An extreme form of irresponsibility is evident in the new security policy being formulated in the White House. Secretary of State Colin Powell has struggled valiantly to hedge it in with conditions and used a form of words intended to make it appear worthy of serious consideration but unalloyed lunacy is contained in the version articulated by President Bush. To his uncomplicated mind he is justified in wanting to get rid of Saddam Hussein on suspicion of the criminal intent he is assumed to harbour of continuing to defy the United States. Bush wants him to die, to abdicate and leave Iraq, or arrange matters in some other way to make himself scarce and cease irritating the President of the United States. The absence of any credible evidence that Saddam is manufacturing weapons of mass destruction is wholly beside the point and apparently not an obstacle. Bush's solution is to put forward a doctrine, which would make Ronald Reagan blush. The United States, he holds, is justified in launching what is euphemistically described as a pre-emptive strike on Iraq on Bush's subjective satisfaction that failure to strike first will result in Saddam striking later.

It is amazing that a country like the United States, which has given the world the First Amendment rights of a free press and helped evolve doctrines adopted by the civilised world of human worth and human personality, should allow its President to so forget himself as to make his country a laughing stock before the international community. In the Bush jurisprudence, suspicion is evidence and accusation equal to guilt. Does it occur to President Bush and if it does not, it should occur to his administration that what the United States does today, some countries will be tempted to do tomorrow. What would George W Bush say if, on a parity of reasoning, Delhi suspects that Musharraf is stockpiling nuclear weapons and jumps to the conclusion that this is enough for a pre-emptive strike against Islamabad! First, and by force of habit, Bush Jr will counsel *restraint*. Next he will send Armitage here, to be followed by Rumsfeld and if necessary, by Colin Powell. So far we have been spared a dissertation of what it would take to get George Bush himself down here. It would help to know so that we can note what contingency to avoid like the plague.

Get out of the Kyoto protocol, rekindle interest in the star wars of Reagan, knock about other countries economically if they interfere with short-term American interests, this is the stuff of Bush's contribution to human progress. As for his much-trumpeted world war on terrorism, Bush is deaf and blind, both. He will not see that Al Qaida is active in Pakistan; its leaders are protected species there by courtesy of the Pakistani President, who is trusted beyond his capacity to deliver. Musharraf is not able to rein in the Al Qaida fighters and their leaders and his dilemma is real, although it does not stop him from assuring Bush to the contrary for very short-term advantage. It is crystal clear that the principal target of Al Qaida remains the United States but Bush takes no notice.

Hopes of getting Bush to understand are receding; the question surfaces what will it take for the truth to sink into the American consciousness and travel to policy-making organisations. On this depends the safety of the world.

THE STATESMAN

18 JUN 2002

~~Bush~~ sued over ABM withdrawal

Agence France Presse

WASHINGTON, June 12. — Thirty-one members of Congress have filed a suit against US President Mr George W Bush in federal court here in an effort to prevent the White House from pulling out of the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty with Russia.

"We have asked the court to declare that the President cannot withdraw from the ABM treaty, or any other treaty, without the concurrence of Congress," said lead plaintiff Mr Dennis Kucinich, a Democratic representative from Ohio.

The USA is scheduled tomorrow to officially pull out of the 1972 treaty widely regarded as the cornerstone of arms control for nearly three decades.

Mr Bush gave notice in December of the unilateral withdrawal over Russian objections to allow for development of a missile defence system, banned under the treaty.

The lawsuit filed in the US district court here argues only Congress can abrogate international treaties, accusing Mr Bush of violating the US constitution. "The constitution empowers Congress to establish laws, and charges the President with carrying out these laws. Nowhere does it give the President power to repeal laws. Only Congress has the authority to undo its work," Mr Kucinich said in a statement. Critics of Mr Bush's decision to withdraw from the treaty have failed in both Houses of Congress to bring a resolution opposing the move to a vote.

THE STATESMAN

13 1111 2002

America takes veil off bomber dirt

FROM DEBORAH CHARLES

Washington, June 11 (Reuters): The American accused of plotting a radioactive "dirty bomb" attack on the United States met repeatedly with top al Qaeda leaders after September 11 to discuss a range of attack options including blowing up hotels and gas stations, US officials said today.

The officials said Abdullah al Muhajir, a New York native born as Jose Padilla, travelled to Afghanistan and Pakistan several times after the September 11 attacks on America to meet senior al Qaeda leader Abu Zubaydah for talks on plans for other types of attacks.

Muhajir first met Zubaydah, a member of Osama bin Laden's inner circle who has since been captured by US officials, in December, 2001. Washington

blames bin Laden and his al Qaeda network for the September 11 attacks that killed 3,000 people. "He is the guy who had discussed with Zubaydah plans to conduct a variety of plans including (dirty bombs)," a US official said.

In their conversations, Zubaydah, Muhajir and other al Qaeda operatives discussed the possibility of detonating a bomb packed with radioactive waste, or blowing up hotel rooms and gas stations in the United States, the official said.

Information provided by Zubaydah, who has been under US interrogation since his March capture in Pakistan, helped lead to Muhajir's arrest, the official said.

Zubaydah had not provided a name but did give other details that helped officials piece together information on Muhajir's

plans. Muhajir was detained in Chicago on May 8 as he arrived in the United States. US officials yesterday announced he had been declared an "enemy combatant" and was transferred to defence department custody.

Deputy defence secretary Paul Wolfowitz said the former gang member had not provided information to investigators.

"To the best of my knowledge he hasn't cooperated at all so far," Wolfowitz said on NBC's *Today Show*.

"He clearly had associates and one of the things we want to ask him about is who those associates were and how we can track them down," he added on the CBS *Early Show*.

Officials said there were likely other operatives still working on the plots, which were only in the planning stages when Muhajir was arrested.

President George W. Bush said today a "full-scale" manhunt was underway for would-be terrorists.

"There's ... a full-scale manhunt on," Bush told reporters at the White House. "We will run down every lead, every hint. We're in for a long struggle in this war on terror. And there are people that still want to harm America... As we run down these killers or would-be killers we'll let you know."

After his first meeting with Zubaydah in Afghanistan, Muhajir travelled to Pakistan for training with al Qaeda on wiring explosives.

At Zubaydah's request, Muhajir then travelled to several cities in Pakistan, at times with bin Laden's top aide, for talks with a group of senior al Qaeda members on the future attacks planned on the United States.

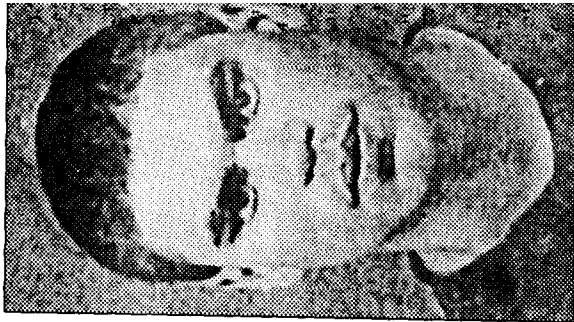
"These al Qaeda leaders had at least a couple conversations with Padilla (Muhajir)," the official said.

"They asked him to come here for reconnaissance for another attack. It could have been a dirty bomb or attacks on hotels or gas stations."

"He came into this country with the intention, by various means, not just the dirty bomb idea, of killing hundreds and maybe thousands of Americans," Wolfowitz said on CBS.

Wolfowitz said Muhajir apparently planned to get radioactive material for the bomb from somewhere within the United States.

"This man actually thought he could get them from places like university labs," he said. "I have no idea how difficult that would be but there is nuclear material around in a lot places."



Dirty bomber Abdullah al Muhajir. (AFP)

Bush plans major security overhaul

By Steve Holland

Washington: Admitting intelligence lapses before September 11, President George W. Bush has proposed a radical overhaul of government to create a new 170,000-strong cabinet agency for homeland security as part of a "titanic struggle against terror".

In a 13-minute prime-time televised speech laying out his vision for a department of homeland security, Mr Bush said intelligence services have detected an increase in the volume of general threats of new attacks.

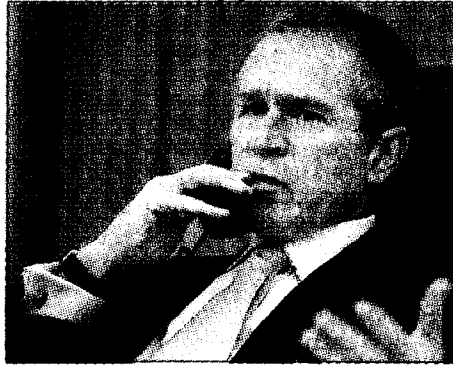
"Based on everything I have seen, I do not believe anyone could have prevented the horror of September 11 — yet we now know that thousands of trained killers are plotting to attack us — and this terrible knowledge requires us to act differently," Mr Bush said on Thursday. The overhaul guaranteed a turf war in the federal bureaucracy and among members of Congress accustomed to setting agency budgets.

The new department would absorb the secret service, the customs service, the coast guard, the immigration and naturalisation service and border patrol, the federal emergency management agency, and draw from more than 100 different government organisations that currently have a piece of the homeland security puzzle.

"America is leading the civilised world in a titanic struggle against terror. Freedom and fear are at war — and freedom is winning," Mr Bush said in his speech, delivered as he stood in the grand foyer of the White House residence. Mr Bush argued that the new department, with an annual budget of \$37 billion and 170,000 employees, would not expand the size and scope of the federal bureaucracy, saying its personnel and budget would largely be drawn from agencies being combined and will end duplication and overlap.

Mr Bush called the reorganisation the most sweeping since President Harry Truman confronted the Cold War in 1947. The secret service, for example, has been under the treasury department since 1865. A new cabinet department has not been created from scratch for 25 years. He called on Congress to approve the new agency before the end of the year. "We face an urgent need," he said. With congressional hearings under way investigating intelligence failures before September 11, Mr Bush admitted there were problems.

"We are now learning that before Septem-



George W. Bush

ber 11, the suspicions and insights of some of our front-line agents did not get enough attention," he said. An FBI memo warning that suspected militants were taking flight training in Arizona was set aside by the agency's bureaucracy. On Thursday, an FBI whistle-blower, agent Coleen Rowley, told the Senate Judiciary Committee that the FBI was hobbled by red tape. The White House denied Mr Bush's announcement was intended to divert attention from the hearings.

"We need to know when warnings were missed or signs unheeded — not to point the finger of blame, but to make sure we correct any problems, and prevent them from happening again," Mr Bush said.

He added: "If you are a front-line worker for the FBI, the CIA, some other law enforcement or intelligence agency, and you see something that raises suspicions, I want you to report it immediately." The immediate reaction from Capitol Hill to the new homeland security agency was largely positive, since many members of Congress, mostly Democrats but also some Republicans, had been calling for the move for months and were irritated that Mr Bush had not done so already.

Mr Bush had formed a White House Office of Homeland Security after September 11 but opposed a cabinet-level agency because of the time required for Congress to approve it.

Senator Joseph Lieberman, a Connecticut Democrat who is chairman of the Senate government affairs committee and had proposed a similar plan, said he would like to see the proposal get to the Senate floor this summer.

"I think the sooner we get it adopted, the sooner the American people can feel safer," he said. Reuters

08 JUL 2002

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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U.S. / FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

Bush favours new agency

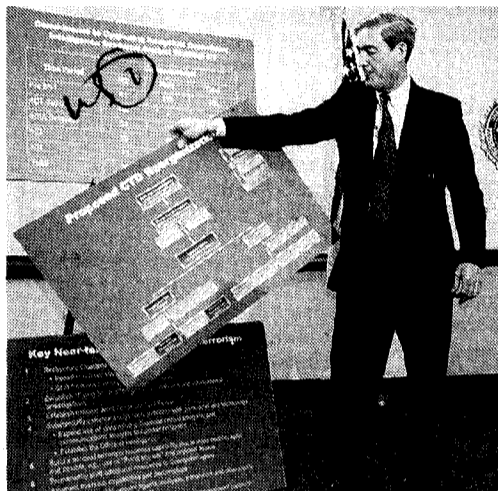
By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JUNE 7. In what is being billed as the most "radical" overhaul of the Government since World War II, the President, George W. Bush, has come up with a Cabinet Agency for Homeland Security aimed at consolidating the work of at least nine Federal departments.

"America is leading the civilised world in a titanic struggle against terror. Freedom and fear are at war — and freedom is winning", Mr. Bush said in an address to the nation from the White House on Thursday night. He argued that his proposal to create the Department of Homeland Security with a budget of about \$37 billions and a workforce of about 170,000 employees will not expand the size and scope of the Federal bureaucracy.

The new agency will be responsible for bolstering transportation security and protecting borders, confronting emergencies and responding to them, preventing attacks using weapons of mass destruction and protecting the critical infrastructure as well as providing a central clearing house for intelligence analysis.

"We face an urgent need and we must move quickly, this year, before the end of the Congressional session", Mr. Bush said. The President is expected to meet top Congressional leaders at the White House on Friday morning and push to win approval for the new agency. In the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terror attacks, Mr. Bush created the Office of Homeland Security but opposed calls at the time for making it a Cabinet Agency.



CHARTING A NEW COURSE: The FBI Director, Robert Mueller, explains the agency's reorganisation plan in Washington recently. — Reuters

Headed by Tom Ridge, that was an Executive Office within the White House and outside the purview of Congress. This irritated many members of Congress who demanded an agency that was accountable to Congress. "I am very grateful the President made this proposal tonight. I think the sooner we get it adopted the sooner the American people can feel safer", the Democratic Senator, Joseph Lieberman, remarked. Mr. Lieberman was one of the first law makers who pressed for a Cabinet level agency.

Although the initial reaction from Capitol Hill has been positive, this new Cabinet Agency proposal is by no means a done deal. The prediction is that major turf battles could be expected as the administration tries to

shift agencies like the Secret Service and the Customs Service from the existing departments. What is also being pointed out is that the President's announcement comes at a time when the administration is perhaps preparing for another major military confrontation and showdown, particularly against Iraq which is singled out as the biggest culprit in the proliferation of

weapons of mass destruction.

On Thursday, the Vice-President, Dick Cheney, called for a "decisive response" against Iraq for seeking weapons of mass destruction and its willingness to use them. "This gathering danger requires the most careful, deliberate and decisive response by America and our allies", Mr. Cheney said in a speech here.

In Europe, the visiting Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, argued that NATO cannot wait until it had absolute proof of a threat to act against terrorists who were aggressively seeking chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. Many of America's allies in Europe and West Asia are opposed to or are wary of a military strike against Iraq.

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THE HINDU

Terror war flags

Is President Bush handling it right?

President Bush has run into flak from both Democratic and Republican lawmakers who want an investigation into whether he could have forestalled the 11 September attacks, following revelations that a Central Intelligence Agency report had warned of the possibility of aircraft hijackings by Al Qaeda men five weeks before the attacks actually took place. Furthermore, it has taken the White House nine months to acknowledge that it had this information, despite repeated and close questioning in Congress. Bush's defence is that the report was not specific enough — the CIA had no inkling, for example, that the plan was to crash the aircraft into high-profile buildings. Nevertheless, hijackings in themselves are serious enough matters and the end use of the aircraft is immaterial; that four of them could happen simultaneously points to a serious lapse of security. The White House says that the CIA's warnings were passed on to federal aviation agencies, and there may be something to this, for the hijackers used knives and box cutters rather than guns and bombs. There are reports that the warnings included the possibility of aircraft with explosives being crashed into the White House or the Pentagon: The responses from high officials in his administration do not deny this. It was no mean task before 11 September to anticipate the ingenuity, skill and ruthlessness with which the attacks would be carried out but the investigation proceeds.

What Bush can be clearly faulted on, however, is having allowed the subsequent war against terror to flag. After having proclaimed from the housetops that retribution for 11 September was nigh, and that the leaders of the organisation responsible would be held to account, Osama bin Laden, Mullah Omar and top leaders of the Al Qaeda were allowed to simply elude the dragnet and mysteriously melt away. To be sure, Bush did well by lighting a bushfire under the repressive Taliban — the installation of an anti-fundamentalist interim government in Kabul, which would deny sanctuary to the Al Qaeda was an important first step. But the US-led coalition's Operation Snipe, launched with much fanfare against Al Qaeda forces supposedly in southeast Afghanistan, has combed this mountainous area without any success. It followed coalition actions in Tora Bora and Operation Anaconda in the Shah-i-kot valley, which ran on broadly similar lines: much sound and fury signifying nothing. The near certainty, of course, is that Al Qaeda has crossed the border into Pakistan's tribal areas, where the Taliban's Pashtun kinsmen are providing them shelter under ISI protection. The bomb blast in Karachi, which killed 12 French naval experts has all the hallmarks of an Al Qaeda operation. Musharraf has managed to hobble operations against the Al Qaeda and related fundamentalist groups inside Pakistan, on the plea that they might endanger his own existence. The hard question the Americans ought to be asking themselves is if Musharraf is not in a position to deliver Al Qaeda operatives hiding out in Pakistan, what use is he to them? Vice-President Dick Cheney now says that a second wave of perhaps even more devastating attacks against the US could be in the offing, which is corroborated by intelligence agencies. Which makes it incumbent on President Bush to go to the root of the problem and go after the Al Qaeda with greater determination and if it embarrasses his friend Musharraf it cannot be helped.

THE STATESMAN

25 MAY 2002

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Britain tightens immigration laws

FROM MIKE PEACOCK

London, May 30 (Reuters): Britain announced a tightening of its immigration laws today, forbidding rejected asylum seekers from launching an appeal within the country.

The news came as new figures showed Britain received 19,520 asylum applications in the first quarter, up 1,520 from the previous three months — and that 75 per cent were rejected.

Nearly 3,000 failed asylum seekers were removed from Britain over the period as the government processed claims more quickly and chartered flights to ship people out en masse. But with applicants on the increase, the backlog is still rising.

Asylum is as hot a topic in

Britain as anywhere in Europe. Prime Minister Tony Blair says unless the issue is dealt with firmly and fairly it will be hijacked by the far right who have gained strong support in France and the Netherlands.

Home secretary David Blunkett praised the rise in removals.

"A speedier system is better for everyone, sending a signal to people-traffickers and illegal migrants that we are continuing to increase removals while ensuring that refugees needing protection can be offered sanctuary as soon as possible," he said in a statement.

Under the planned new laws, failed asylum applicants will be sent back to their country of origin, or a country they passed through on the way to Britain, from where they can appeal

against their rejection, an interior ministry official said.

Most who reach Britain have travelled through another European country en route.

The latest flashpoint for Britain is the Sangatte refugee camp, in northern France, from where asylum seekers launch nightly forays into the nearby

Europe for joint border police

Rome, May 30 (Reuters): European ministers proposed today creating a joint border police unit to crack down on illegal immigration at airports, a large and growing problem in the 15-member union.

The pilot project, which needs regionwide approval, is part of a broader plan drawn up by five European countries to look at ways of creating a common EU border guard.

"We don't want Europe to turn into a fortress, but we want to promote an integrated model that will guarantee the security of our citizens within our common space," Italy's interior minister Claudio Scajola told delegates in Rome before presenting the feasibility study and pilot project.

Channel Tunnel in an attempt to reach England.

But France is unlikely to want to take back a stream of people under Blunkett's new plan. French Ambassador to London Daniel Bernard said it could break existing European Union conventions.

"We have to suppress the cause and not attack the effects," he told BBC radio.

The Home Office could not say how the system would work or how, in practice, people could launch an appeal from abroad.

The proposals were also slammed by Keith Best, head of the immigration advisory service. "The idea that you can send people back to another country and then still ensure that they can exercise their rights to appeal is clear nonsense," he told

BBC Television. "If we believe in civil liberties... then I believe we should resist these measures."

EU leaders will discuss harmonising their immigration and asylum laws at a summit in Seville next month.

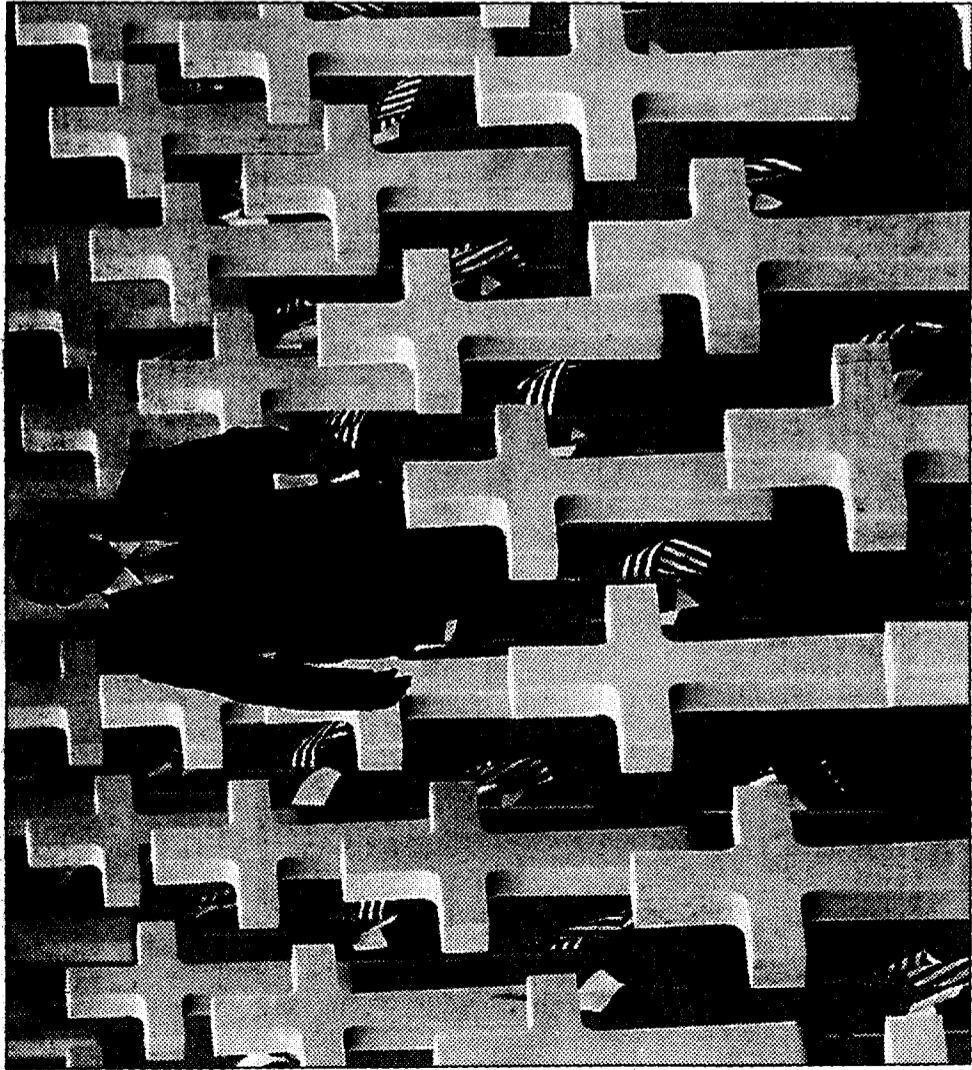
The bloc's interior ministers and officials met in Rome today to discuss a study carried out by Italy, Spain, Belgium, Germany and France for creating a common border guard.

"Applications to the UK have fallen in the last financial year: Austria, Spain, France and Germany have all seen increases," Blunkett said. "The UK is a driving force in the move to secure a common EU asylum policy which strengthens our borders and tackles illegal immigration."



Tony Blair

Bush takes terror war to Normandy



Bush walks through the World War II Normandy American Cemetery on his way to deliver a speech as part of US Memorial Day ceremonies near Omaha Beach, France. (AFP)

France, May 27 (Reuters): US President George W. Bush paid homage to American war dead near Normandy's D-Day beaches today and vowed that new generations would make the same sacrifices for freedom.

On the first US Memorial Day since the September 11 attacks, Bush linked past and present, the 1944 liberation of France and the current war on terrorism.

"Our security is still bound up together in a transatlantic alliance with soldiers in many uniforms defending the world from terrorists at this very hour," Bush said.

"For some military families in America and in Europe the grief is recent with the losses we have suffered in Afghanistan," Bush said. "They can know, however, that the cause is just and, like other generations, these sacrifices have spared many others from tyranny and sorrow."

After his helicopter swept along the invasion beaches, Bush took a solitary walk among the rows of white crosses marking the graves of 9,386 Americans buried on a cliff top above Omaha Beach, where US forces suffered their greatest casualties in the assault on heavily fortified German defences.

Standing unprotected against a light rain, the President struggled to keep his emotions in check as he paid tribute to those who made the ultimate

sacrifice. "The gravemarkers here all face west across an ageless and indifferent ocean to the country these men and women served and loved," he said. "The thoughts of America on this Memorial Day turn to them and to all the fallen comrades in arms."

"The day will come when no one is left who knew them, when no visitor to the cemetery can stand before a grave remembering a face and a voice. The day will never come when America forgets them."

As a band played the US national anthem, Bush and French President Jacques Chirac laid a

wreath at the Memorial Colonnade near a long reflecting pool. The ground trembled from the cannon blasts of a 21-gun salute sending goutts of smoke high into the air and the mournful sound of a lone bugler playing *Taps* wafted across the beaches.

Bush and Chirac stopped in Sainte-Mere-L'Eglise, the first French town liberated by US troops after D-Day in June 1944.

They saw the church steeple where, 58 years ago, Paratrooper John Steel's chute snagged, leaving him dangling helplessly to watch as many of his comrades were killed by waiting Germans. A mannequin of a soldier hang-

ing from a snagged parachute has adorned the church ever since.

"It is fitting that we remember those who sacrificed because today we defend our freedoms, we defend our freedoms against people who can't stand freedom," Bush said in the stone church at Sainte-Mere-L'Eglise.

"This defence will require the sacrifice of our forefathers, but it is a sacrifice I can promise you we'll make, a sacrifice we will make for the good of America, the good of France and the good of freedom all over the world."

Chirac stressed France and the United States had long been allies in defending democracy and would maintain their solidarity in the face of terrorism.

"Today, still, our two countries fight together against terrorist barbarity that, on the morning of September 11, so cruelly plunged America into mourning," he said. "A barbarity that nothing can excuse, that revolts us and that we are determined to eradicate."

Bush arrived by helicopter on a grey, damp day and was met by several hundred children waving tiny French and American flags. The small red-roofed church was packed to capacity with 350 guests and some of Sainte-Mere-L'Eglise's 1,600 townsfolk.

Jet-lagged but high on humour

Paris, May 27 (Reuters): Five days, four cities, three countries and two late nights finally caught up with US President George W. Bush yesterday.

"I'm jet-lagged," he admitted at a news conference with French President Jacques Chirac after losing track of a reporter's four-part question. "What's the first couple?" he asked distractedly.

"That's what happens when you're over 55," Bush quipped as he stood beside the 69-year-old newly re-elected French leader.

Bush, who is on a gruelling week-long European trip that ends in Italy on Tuesday, showed signs of weariness several times during the half-hour session.

"Okay, phew, a lot of questions here," he noted at one point.

A US television network reporter momentarily startled Bush by ending his question about anti-American demonstrations in Europe in impeccable French. Without missing a beat, the President, who occasionally sprinkles his speeches with Spanish phrases, responded: "Very good. The guy memorises four words and he plays like he's inter-continental. I'm impressed. Que bueno."

Pre-WTC attack warnings ✓

Opp wants probe into Bush's role

58-12
19/5

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, May 18. — Opposition Democrats are demanding an investigation and even a commission to know what the US President George W Bush knew and when about intelligence reports that Osama bin Laden would try to blow up some key American buildings and that too many Arabs were seeking training in flying schools in the USA.

While President Bush is strongly defending himself and the "wagons" are circling around him protectively led by National Security Adviser Ms Condoleezza Rice and Press Secretary Mr Arie Fleischer, it looks as though the issue would not go away soon though the President may escape criticism eventually.

The strongest defence by the Bush administration is that bin Laden's Al-Qaida is too smart for the Americans. The officials interpreted the warnings to mean conventional hijackings and not using planes as bombs with suicidal fanatics at the controls to destroy the twin towers and part of the Pentagon.

To ensure that he will have full intelligence briefings, Mr Bush now has joint briefings by the CIA and FBI. Formerly, only the CIA used to brief the President.

1999 report had warned about attacks: A federal report released two years before 11 September had warned that terrorists might be planning to crash aircraft loaded with explosives into the Pentagon or the Central

Rumsfeld warns of fresh attack

WASHINGTON, May 18. — The US defence secretary Mr Donald H Rumsfeld has said that more terrorist attacks on the USA are likely, even though the government is better prepared in the light of the 11 September suicide attacks. "I think we have to be realistic. The likelihood is — because it's not possible to defend at every place at every moment — that there will be another terrorist attack. We should just face that reality," he said in an interview with radio reporters yesterday. — AP

Intelligence Agency, adds AFP. "Suicide bombers belonging to Al-Qaida's Martyrdom Battalion could crash-land an aircraft packed with high explosives (C-4 and semtex) into the Pentagon, the headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency, or the White House," the September 1999 report, called "Sociology and Psychology of Terrorism: Who Becomes a Terrorist and Why?" warned.

"Ramzi Yousef had planned to do this against the CIA headquarters," the report noted, referring to the man convicted of being the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombings.

White House spokesman Mr Ari Fleischer said the report "did not come to the attention of this administration when we took office on 20 January. /

THE STATESMAN

19 MAY 2002

America tightens visitor & student visa rules

S Rajagopalan
Washington, April 9

THE US has announced sweeping changes in visa rules governing foreign visitors and students.

The duration of a visitor visa is to be slashed to 30 days from the present six months, while student visas must have regular student visas before beginning studies in American universities.

The changes, which have been in the works ever since the September 11 terrorist attacks, will take effect in two stages. The one relating to students comes into force immediately, while the one on visitor visas will take effect after a 30-day period set apart for

public comment.

The decisions, announced by the US Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) yesterday, could affect millions of visitors. That includes a good number from India, mostly relatives and friends visiting the US for long periods at the invitation of the burgeoning Indian American community.

According to INS figures, about 10 million people from across the world visited the US on tourist visas received during 2000. About 75 per cent of them stayed less than a month. Another 2.5 million travelled on business visas, their stay averaging 13 days.

For students, the new norms

stipulate that foreign nationals must have regular student visas before commencing studies in American universities. Hitherto, one could visit on a tourist visa, join a course and apply for a change of status to student visa.

The INS decision to target student visas follows the discovery that the ring leader of September 11, Mohammed Atta of Egypt had entered the US on tourist visas, later joined a Florida flight school and applied for student visas.

Last month, the INS had received a dressing-down from President Bush following an embarrassing disclosure about its "approval" of student visas for the two terrorists a full six

months after they brought down the World Trade Centre and perished in the operation.

Henceforth, foreign nationals wanting to switch from a tourist or business visa to a student visa will have to return to their home country and apply. If that condition is met, the INS for its part would process the applications within 30 days. As of last September, some 600,000 foreign students were enrolled in American universities and colleges.

The INS proposal to limit visitor visas to 30 days set off alarm bells in the US's tourism and travel industry, which is still to recover from the impact of September 11. A spokesman of the

Travel Industry Association of America said the INS should settle for more thorough checks while issuing visas instead of slashing their duration.

INS commissioner James W Ziglar, however, said the new rules have struck an "appropriate balance".

Another official said that visitors wanting to stay beyond 30 days will have to show unexpected or compelling reasons for an extension, such as the need for medical treatment or a delay in completing a business matter. Those who do not meet this criterion will have no option but return home after a month, reapply for a visa.

10 APR 2002

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Ethnic and religious hatred is built into America's present and past

Missing in history

DIPLOMACY

K.P. NAYAR

1-10
26/4

A diplomat by definition is one who upholds the interests of his country. It is a reflection of how Indians revere intellectual excellence and integrity that they expect men like John Kenneth Galbraith and Robert D. Blackwill to do this with greater sophistication than others in the profession. It was a bitter disappointment, therefore, for this columnist to see Blackwill — who towers above every other American ambassador to India in recent memory — putting officialese in a letter which appeared on this page on March 11.

I would like to believe that in writing this letter, the ambassador was not doing a diplomatic hatchet job, which is required of him. It remains my conviction that the letter would not have been signed by Blackwill had he not been away from the United States of America since July last year — when he went to India — and, therefore, somewhat out of touch with his country except through cables from the state department and his infrequent visits to Washington lasting no more than a few days.

What riled the ambassador and prompted his letter was an article in these columns on March 6 about the killings in Godhra and its aftermath in Gujarat. That article carried the following paragraph: "The fact is that India has escaped any significant negative international fallout of these events primarily because, after September 11, it is no longer abhorrent in America to kill Muslims. No one will acknowledge it — least of all the officialdom — but not only in the US, but in many parts of the Western world, it will even be said in private, post-September 11, that such killings are desirable — or inevitable."

Blackwill wrote in his missive that "hate crime goes against the very fabric of American society" and reasoned: "I hope you will agree that your article was mistaken in its portrayal of American attitudes towards minority communities."

I wish the ambassador would have the courage of conviction to look Zahid Ghani in the eye and tell him this. Ghani is a Pakistani journalist in New York, accredited to the United Nations, who has been covering the world body for the last seven years. Four days after terrorists struck at the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, Ghani's brother-in-law, Waqar Hasan, was shot and killed in his grocery store in Dallas, Texas. His only crime was that he looked south Asian. The lives of Hasan's wife and four young daughters are today in a shambles.

During the recent visit of General Pervez Musharraf to Washington, when ties between the US and Pakistan were convulsed by the fate of the journalist, Daniel Pearl, Ghani sent out a note to fellow journalists in the US, which made many of his south Asian colleagues in America sit up. In Pakistan, the entire country was

being turned upside down in the search for the American journalist. But in Texas, the murder of the Pakistani was little more than a number for those who compile federally mandated statistics of hate crimes. Or maybe Blackwill should talk to Hasnain, a 20-year-old Pakistani, whose story is now well known within the south Asian community on the east coast of America.

Hasnain, whose relatives have narrated his horror story to the media on the condition that his last name be withheld, was returning to his university in New York on September 18 after visiting relatives in Houston, Texas. Because it is a humiliating experience for south Asians, Arabs and other non-Caucasians in general to use airports in America since September 11, Hasnain took a Greyhound bus from Houston bound for New York.

En route, his bus was raided and Hasnain was taken to the Stone County Correctional Facility in Wiggins, Mississippi, on a charge that his immigration papers were not in order. If anyone were to allege that the young Pakistani student was tortured in custody, Blackwill and many others would rise up in righteous indignation to swear that torture is never practised in custody in the US. That is something that happens in the third world alone. The experience of Arabs, south Asians and others since September 11 has shown that torture in custody is far, far more sophisticated than anything that authorities in the third world can think of. Here is what happened to Hasnain.

At the detention centre in Mississippi, Hasnain was allowed to phone his aunt. As he was approaching the payphone, a white inmate of the jail, described by the Pakistani as huge, went up to him and punched him so hard that the blow broke his front tooth. Two other white men joined in the attack, but somehow Hasnain managed to reach an emergency bell and pressed the button.

A lady's voice answered his plea for help, but Hasnain says it was 25 minutes before help came, during which time the beating continued. And even when the guards arrived, they refused to interfere or stop the violence, according to Hasnain's account. The Pakistani youth asked to be taken to a hospital, but instead, he was sent to the prison nurse, who gave him an ice pack and two pain-relieving tablets. To avoid further beatings, Hasnain was sent into solitary confinement. When he met his aunt a week later, Hasnain still could not hear out of his left ear or eat any solid food.

Limitations of space do not allow for the narration of the tragic story of

Balbir Singh Sodhi, a 49-year-old gas station attendant in Mesa, Arizona, who was shot dead by a still-unrepentant white man, only because Sodhi had a beard and wore a Sikh turban. Or of Sukhwant Singh, a Sikh priest in Cleveland, Ohio, who barely escaped with his life after burning bottles filled with petrol were thrown into his bedroom at the Guru Gobind Singh *gurdwara*.

African-American descent, was the only legislator to vote on September 14 against a resolution by which the US congress ceded its constitutional authority to Bush in going to war against terrorists. In response, she received over 2,000 death threats and now has round-the-clock protection. In Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini issued a *fatwa* against Salman Rushdie for apostasy. Even Rushdie did not receive as many

neck down. In April 2000, he was shot in a hate crime. Anil Thakur, 31, a customer who happened to be in the shop died in the attack. In September 1998, Rishi Maharaj, a teenager on his way home in Ozone Park, New York, was beaten to death by three men with baseball bats. Why? There were too many Indians moving into that neighbourhood and the assailants wanted them out of the area. The list is long and could fill a book, if ever one is written on this subject.

Indians are generally less familiar with American history than with the history of England, Europe or Asia. Unlike them, Blackwill ought to know that ethnic and religious hatred is built into America's history. Few Indians have heard of Bhagat Singh Thind. He was one of 67 Indians who had been granted American citizenship in 17 states between 1905 and 1923 because the US naturalization law of 1790 provided for citizenship to "free white persons". Since Indians were considered Aryans and a branch of the Caucasian family, they were taken as eligible for US citizenship.

The law was subsequently changed and Thind took the issue to the US supreme court. The learned justices, in their wisdom, decided that it was not just enough for Thind to be Caucasian, he should also have been "white". Following the judgement in the *US versus Bhagat Singh Thind* case, the US citizenship of all the 67 Indians was revoked. At least one Indian-American committed suicide. But even before the law took its perverse course, it was being taken into their own hands by white men. It is on record that in 1907, in an act of blatant racial hatred, 700 Indians, mostly Punjabis, were uprooted from their settlement in Bellingham, Washington state, and driven into Canada. The exercise was repeated in Everett in the same state and elsewhere later.

I shall not dwell on how America treated its native Indians, black slaves or the Japanese who were thrown into concentration camps after the attack on Pearl Harbour because these travesties of justice and human rights are too well known. But one little known episode from history bears narration.

Some military historians have recorded that as the tide of World War II changed for the Allies in Europe, it was the brave Japanese-American fighters of the segregated 442nd Nisei regimental combat team of the US army who broke through the German "Gothic Line" in Italy to reach the Nazi concentration camp of Dachau and bring hope for its survivors. But the Americans hastily replaced the Japanese with white soldiers before the liberation of Dachau was announced to the world. Even to this day, Japanese-Americans have a military-sounding phrase for their role in Dachau: missing in history or MiH.



Hate crimes are raging across America, prompting civil rights campaigners to bemoan that "we" (Americans) appear as barbaric as the ones we are trying to fight in the name of civilized values. In his letter, Blackwill brought to bear the moral force of the Washington archbishop's plea against hate crimes. I recall a memorial service at Washington's National Cathedral on September 17, where it was said: "As we act, let us not become the evil that we deplore."

In his letter, Blackwill quoted lofty words from the president, George W. Bush: "America counts millions of Muslims amongst our citizens, and Muslims make an incredibly valuable contribution to our country. Muslims are doctors, lawyers, law professors, members of the military, entrepreneurs, shopkeepers, moms and dads. And they need to be treated with respect. In our anger and emotion, our fellow Americans must treat each other with respect."

But the question is: is it in the president's power to do anything about hate crimes? Barbara Lee, the Democratic congresswoman from California of

‘Hate crimes across the US are prompting civil rights campaigners to bemoan that Americans appear as barbaric as those they are fighting in the name of civilized values’

death threats from Iranians or Muslims around the world as the California congresswoman did from her compatriots. Yet the US ambassador insists that "hate crime goes against the very fabric of American society".

Lest it should be assumed that hate crimes in the US against south Asians — and others — are a reaction to the horrible terrorists attacks on September 11, Blackwill should travel to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on his next visit home. There, at the India Grocers store, he would be gladly directed to Sandip Patel, 25, the former manager of the store, who is paralyzed from the

US fences cyber front, more doors closed for non-citizens

CHARLES PILLER
WASHINGTON, MARCH 7

SPARKED by security concerns since the Sept 11 terrorist attacks, the Defense Dept has begun laying the groundwork to ban non US citizens from a wide range of computer projects. The policy — slated for adoption within 90 days — extends restrictions on foreign nationals handling secret information to “sensitive but unclassified positions,” which include the swelling number of contract workers who process pay checks, write software, track supplies and maintain e-mail systems.

The move comes amid a growing awareness of the vulnerability of government computer systems in an era when software espionage and malicious hacking have become common. The Defense Department’s proposal, covering a work force that accounts for one-third of federal civilian employees, would represent the sweeping implemen-

tation of the government’s restrictions on foreign technology workers. However, the plan has raised concerns that the government is being xenophobic and shortsighted.

Experts said barring foreign nationals from certain computer projects opens the prospect that key jobs will go unfilled due to a shortage of qualified citizens. Costs may also rise sharply as higher-paid US citizens replace foreign workers. Annalee Saxenian, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley said: “There’s probably no company in Silicon Valley whose 10 to 40 per cent of work force is not foreigners.”

Even Richard A. Clarke, cyber security adviser to President Bush, views the restrictions as a misguided priority. He said he, however, supports the use of background checks, automatic recorders that log keystrokes by programmers and stricter rules on individuals changing data.

Ed Yourdon, a technology security expert said “Most of the bad

things done on computers are done by insiders — not teenage hackers in Moscow.” “In many instances, the (Defense Dept) was not aware when programming changes were being done by a contractor who used foreign nationals,” said David L. McClure, who led the GAO study.

The Defense Dept had been developing a security system from foreign nationals working on unclassified computer operations, but Sept 11 prompted plans for more restrictive measures. The Dept had no estimate of how many non citizens it has as employees, but acknowledged that the shift could prove costly. Some defense technology contractors also said they could not readily estimate how many of their employees are foreign nationals. Dan Kuehl, a professor of cyber security at the National Defense University, said any move to restrict unclassified tasks to US citizens could create a logistical nightmare.

—LATWP

INDIAN EXPRESS

8 MAR 2001

US Congress seeks Enron facts

57-13
REUTERS WSD

WASHINGTON, March 2. — As Congress squeezed the former Enron Corporation president, Mr Jeffrey Skilling, yesterday for more facts on the company's historic collapse, Mr Skilling used a television interview to take another swipe at US lawmakers. Escalating his war of words with the nation's elected representatives, Mr Skilling accused Congress of playing "judge and jury" in its probe of his role in the Enron debacle.

"The US Congress has decided that I am guilty until proven innocent," Mr Skilling said in the interview on CNN's "Larry King Live. I don't think the Congress was acting as a fact-finding entity, trying to figure out what happened," he said. "It's an election year, and during an election year, I guess you would expect something like that to happen, but I think that Congress is acting as

judge and jury," Mr Skilling said.

As Mr Skilling counter-attacked, the California Democratic Representative, Mr Henry Waxman, sent him a letter asking for responses to 17 questions about Enron's broadband services, electricity markets, off-the-books partnerships and political activity.

Mr Waxman asked Mr Skilling to respond to the questions by 7 March. A letter sent to Mr Skilling on Thursday by four other lawmakers, including the House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman, Rep. Billy Tauzin, set the same deadline.

Ten congressional committees are probing the corporate scandal at Enron that led to the largest bankruptcy filing in US history, destroyed thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in investor equity and shook investor confidence.

The Justice Department is conducting a criminal probe and the Securities

and Exchange Commission is also investigating the downfall of what was once USA's seventh-largest firm.

Mr Skilling, who resigned unexpectedly from Enron last August just over three months before it fell apart, said his workaholic tendencies had taken a toll on his personal life and he left because "I was tired." The former Enron executive said when he left, he believed the company was "in great shape," and that he was subsequently shocked at its collapse.

Mr Skilling has testified before Congress, but some other former top officers have appeared and refused to testify, citing their Fifth Amendment rights.

Continuing his approach of openly confronting questioners, Mr Skilling told King on CNN he had some regrets.

"Would I have done some things differently? I think — I think we all would do — we would do a number of things differently," he said.

THE STATESMAN

3 MAR 2002

Bush revives shadow govt plan after 9/11

A joke doing the rounds in the Congress goes that the U.S. is just a pretzel and a cheeseburger away from having Speaker Dennis Hastert as president.

The reference is to President Bush choking over a pretzel recently and his vice-president's suspect heart that could be knocked over with a few greasy calories.

Under the American system, the House Speaker is third in line of succession to the White House. But just how seriously the U.S. is taking the continuity of government (COG) business is now revealed by news that the Bush administration has dusted off and kicked in a long forgotten plan to have a shadow-or-back-up government in the event of Washington being incapacitated or wasted.

Originally conceived during the Cold War years to survive an all-out nuclear attack by the Soviet Union, the COG plan is now being applied in the context of possible acquisition of nuclear devices, perhaps a suitcase nuclear bomb, by terrorists. Conceivably, Washington would be the first target of such an attack.

The COG plan was wheeled out within the first hours and days after the 9/11 attack when dozens of key mid-and high-level government officials were whisked away in choppers and buses to two separate undisclosed, fortified locations on the East Coast. Here, in bunkers buried deep underground, the administrators would work to keep the wheels of government moving.

The first priority would be to contain disruptions of the nation's food and water supplies, transportation links, energy and telecommunications networks, public health and civil order. Later it would begin to reconstitute the government.

Such back-up plans have long been part of U.S. military thinking. The U.S. military command has long maintained what are called redundancy centres of communication and control, buried deep in the mid-west mountains in Colorado and Nebraska. But it is the first time the civilian government has gone that route.

Government officials have not disclosed the exact chain of command or who would head the shadow government assuming the leadership in Washington is eviscerated. But it is widely believed that

vice-president Dick Cheney, who has mostly been at secure undisclosed (the expression has spawned much merriment and jokes in the U.S.) locations since the crisis began, will be around somewhere. Bush and Cheney have not been seen together publicly since 9/11. In fact, Defence Minister George Fernandes has been one of the few leaders to meet Cheney in flesh and blood in recent times.

The back-up plan has caused consternation in the Capitol Hill, seat of the U.S. legislature, since it involves only the Executive branch. The Congress and the Judiciary have separate contingency plans in the event of catastrophic attack but nothing in the nature of the survivalist government that is in the works.

According to some accounts, the Bush administration now plans to make the shadow government a permanent feature, somewhat like the nuclear-armed submarines and bombers that are always out on patrol ready for a second strike. Since the COG plans kicked in, some hundred-odd officials have been taking turns in rotation, spending up to a week at a time on site. They are barred from disclosing their precise location and their friends and family can stay in touch with them through toll-free numbers.

But all is not hunky-dory with the hunkered government. Although the previously undisclosed sites are said to be equipped with generators, telephones, televisions, computers and food rations, officials who sped there post 9/11 soon found that some of the systems, particularly the communication equipment, were more than a generation old. They were not fully compatible with the present day systems. The glitches are now being ironed out.

The secret government might find some resonance in New Delhi's corridors of power considering how close the Indian leadership came to being wiped out in the parliament attack and the hair-trigger nuclear situation that exists in the sub-continent.

But then, cynical Indians might think we have had such a shadow government in place for several decades. After all, successive governments have been in a survivalist mode for years, trying to maintain some semblance of order.

ONLY IN AMERICA
CHIDANAND RAJGHATTA

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Enron investigators sue White House

S Rajagopalan
Washington, February 23

CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATORS have filed their first ever lawsuit for public records against the Government, seeking documents from a White House energy task force as part of a probe in the Enron affair.

The US General Accounting Office, the investigative arm of the Congress, said in a statement yesterday that it had filed suit in US district court in Wash-

ington "to obtain certain records in connection with the national energy policy development group", the task force headed by Vice-President Dick Cheney. The White House vowed to fight for its right to privileged communications.

"The President will fight for this right," spokesman Scott Stanzel said. "He is standing strong on principle, fighting for his right and the right of all future presidents to receive advice without it being turned into a

virtual news release."

"We expect to prevail," Stanzel said, "because the policy is sound and principle is on our side, and the General Accounting Office is acting beyond their authority."

The GAO statement said, "This is the first time that GAO has filed suit against a federal official in connection with a records access issue. We take this step reluctantly. Nevertheless, given GAO's responsibility to the Congress and the Ameri-

can people, we have no other choice. Our repeated attempts to reach a reasonable accommodation on this matter have not been successful," it added.

The White House has repeatedly refused to turn over documents related to Cheney's energy task force, insisting it would hamper the administration's ability to formulate policy.

The papers include documentation of meetings with officials from Enron Corp, that collapsed amid accusations of improper

reporting and accounting practices.

Cheney has said he would rather go to court than divulge information from private interviews held in the White House with executives of the now-disgraced energy company while he was formulating the administration's national energy plan.

Cheney reportedly held six meetings with Enron executives, including former chairman and chief executive Kenneth Lay.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

24 FEB 2002

Enron ex-CEO denies role in giant's downfall



JEFFREY SKILLING

Washington, February 8

FORMER ENRON CEO Jeffrey Skilling adamantly denied any wrongdoing on Thursday in the downfall of the energy-trading giant.

"I did not do anything that wasn't in the best interests of shareholders," said Skilling, the most senior Enron executive to testify before a congressional subcommittee investigating the biggest corporate collapse in US history. Nearly \$80 billion in market value was lost.

Appearing combative and at times defiant during two hours of grilling by members of a House Energy and Commerce subcommittee, Skilling dismissed accusations that he knew much about the complex financial partnerships that led to Enron's failure.

He disputed earlier testimony by Enron COO Jeff McMahon, among others, that he had been warned the partnerships were a conflict of interest for Enron executives and that they had been

used to hide debt and artificially inflate profits.

Skilling, 48, resigned Aug. 14 for personal reasons after serving as CEO for six months. But he said that when he left, he believed the company was solvent. "I absolutely and unequivocally believed the company was in good financial shape," he said.

In a moment of contriteness, Skilling acknowledged that Enron's financial collapse cost thousands of jobs and destroyed scores of investment and retirement portfolios. "I am devastated by and apologetic about what Enron has come to represent. I know that no words can make things right. Too many people have been hurt too much," he said.

Last fall, Enron, citing the partnerships, restated earnings back to 1997 and reduced shareholder equity by \$1.2 billion. But Skilling didn't blame Enron's failure on the partnerships. "As far I know, the financial statements issued by Enron accurately reflected the financial condition of the company," he said. "It is my belief that Enron's failure was due to a classic run on the bank, a liquidity crisis spurred by a lack of confidence in the company."

Skilling also disputed reports that, like other Enron executives, he had dumped Enron shares before the company's financial woes came fully known. Before leaving, he owned 1.1 million shares, and he said he still owns 940,000 shares. Also on Thursday, Jordan Mintz, an Enron in-house legal counsel, testified that Skilling and other senior Enron executives ignored key early warnings over the propriety of partnerships.

USA Today

THE HINDU

WSO 19/8 92

The Enron charade

By Arvind Sivaramakrishnan

THE PHRASES are already familiar. The collapse of Enron, the American trans-national energy giant, is the world's largest corporate failure ever; hundreds of people in the U.S. Government are potentially implicated; senior Enron executives made hundreds of millions of dollars by selling their shares when they knew the company was an empty shell, but they stopped their employees from doing so and thereby destroyed the staff's jobs, life savings, and pensions, all of which had been invested in the company, sometimes under orders. A senior Enron vice-president has committed suicide, and the U.S. Vice-President, Richard Cheney, refuses to hand over to Congress records of his several meetings with Enron. Just to deepen public suspicion, it has come to light that Enron had donated over \$6 millions in all to George W. Bush's election campaigns and those of elected officials at other levels. Enron's own U.S. employees may get some redress, as a class action is to be instituted; this time the U.S. courts cannot — as they did in the case of Union Carbide — rule that the case must be heard in another country. It is, of course, not clear who will pay the damages.

Yet, the shock waves are echoing round other countries. To start with, Enron's accountants, Arthur Andersen, passed the corporation's accounts; but Andersen also had a consultancy contract with Enron. Further, Andersen's apparent oversight has caused great embarrassment to the British Labour Party, which has had close links with it for several years. Andersen has donated to party funds and among other things paid for the party's Social Justice Inquiry. The opposition Conservative Party is making the most of this, but it too had taken donations from Andersen, and its former Energy Minister, Lord Wakeham, is to testify to the U.S. Congress about the links.

The row in Britain is only just starting. It is probably no accident that Andersen's links with the Labour Party have been accompanied by the removal of restrictions on gas-fired power stations, the sort Enron used to build. The Conservative Party did blacklist Andersen for apparently allowing the failed car manufacturer De Lorean to accumulate 70 million pounds of British taxpayers' money

Executive; there is already talk of enforcement via the courts.

In addition, it is already public knowledge that the Bush presidency's energy policy is very close to something like 17 of Enron's stated priorities — such as mining and logging on public land, the unilateral U.S. decision to withdraw from the U.N. Kyoto Protocol on global warming, and so on. Even the deregulation

tionals are among the loudest and most successful claimants for state aid. The airlines of the United States, which destroyed Mr. Clinton's proposals to tighten security on domestic air services, clamoured for and got tens of millions of dollars from the Bush administration after the destruction of New York's World Trade Center. British manufacturers, faced with enormous problems, have openly said they cannot recover without state aid; commercial farming in the industrial world, under enough suspicion over farming practices, is hugely subsidised and protected by excise barriers against imports from the developing world. Several of the large corporations insist that they operate under legislation made by states; but if Enron is anything to go by, the corporations all but write the legislation themselves.

What has come out of the Enron collapse is not just deceit, bullying, and corporate pressure on elected Governments (Enron is the only corporation to have had an entire Amnesty International report written about it, on rights abuses in India and Latin America). It is the remarkable fragility of so many of the businesses concerned; they seem to borrow colossal sums on no more than the assumption of future returns, privatise such profits as they make, and socialize the costs of their failures. We, the public, pick up the tab in the form of state aid to the corporations after they have failed, not to mention environmental and other damage. If the tycoons are half as good as they claim to be, how is it that their companies are so fragile? Is it time to shine the light into the corporate world? If we the public do not, no one else will. And the head of one trans-national food giant told Mr. Clinton that the corporate world feared consumer backlash above all else.

(The writer is lecturer in politics and law at Taunton's College, Southampton, U.K.)

Despite all their bravado and contempt for the very idea of the state, multinationals are among the loudest and most successful claimants for aid.

when the company was in serious trouble. But Andersen, which also has public-relations businesses, then did a good job on the Labour Party's public image and it may not be a coincidence that the probable 200-million pound-fine over De Lorean was reduced — under a Labour Government — to 21 million pounds.

Even if the donations which have been made public are lawful, the Enron scandal raises much wider issues, some of which the major political actors and the press have apparently not wanted to address. One set of questions has to do with corporate influence on Government. For example, Mr. Cheney's refusal to hand over details to the General Accounting Office, investigative arm of Congress, cannot conceal the fact that those meetings were held while the Bush administration was drafting its energy policy, in which one of the first moves was the removal of the former President, Bill Clinton's ban on oil-prospecting in the Alaskan Arctic Nature Reserve. Mr. Cheney could be in for a rough ride here, as there is considerable ill-feeling between the Senate and the Bush administration, and the U.S. Constitution gives Congress enormous, if rarely-used, power over the

of electricity supply in California, which caused Third World-style chaos in that State, was something Enron wanted.

The tale of corporate influence on Government, dismal, ugly, and wretched though it be, may well not amount to the most serious issue arising from the Enron collapse. At least one commentator has remarked on the brutality of a corporate culture which automatically fires one fifth of all staff every year irrespective of success or failure and is based on reciprocal plotting, spying, and denunciation by the staff (just the sort of thing done in the Soviet Union in Stalin's time). Second, an entire ethos of evasive accountancy — Enron's condition was expertly concealed for years — and sycophantic financial journalism combined with the smokescreen of commercial confidentiality means that anything resembling reliable information on the corporate world is virtually impossible to obtain. The surreal possibility arises that the whole of the business world is a gigantic charade.

Of course the charade is unsustainable, and the major corporations of the world probably know that. Despite all their bravado and contempt for the very idea of the state, multina-

THE HINDU

US Senate votes to subpoena Enron chief

Washington, February 5

A US Senate panel investigating last year's collapse of energy giant Enron voted today to subpoena former company chairman Kenneth Lay to testify about the causes of the largest us corporate bankruptcy.

The Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee voted unanimously to force Lay to face lawmakers' questions two days after he snubbed Congress with his refusal to appear voluntarily before the panel. Lay had failed to turn up to the first day of the Congressional hearings into Enron's collapse amid signs that what was initially interpreted as a corporate disaster could also emerge as a huge criminal fraud.

After Congressmen appeared on TV at the weekend accusing Enron executives of "corporate corruption", and suggesting someone may end up going to jail for insider trading, Lay withdrew his offer to testify. "These inflammatory statements show that judgments have been reached and the tenor of the hearing will be prosecutorial," his lawyer, Earl Silbert, wrote to the Senate Commerce Committee and the House Financial Services Committee. Democrats and Republicans had lined up to support the issue of subpoenas to force Lay to come before their committees.

Last night Lay said he was stepping down from Enron's board. Lay had already resigned as chief executive officer, but had retained his seat on the board, giving rise to criticism that he was trying to control the probe into Enron's affairs.

Senator Ernest Hollings, the Democratic chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, had told a Press conference that a vote would be held today on issuing a subpoena to force Lay to appear on February 12. **Agencies**

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

6 FEB 2002

Congress' Enron hearings begin without Lay

Washington, February 4

CONGRESS BEGAN a week of hearings on Monday into the collapse of energy giant Enron Corp without a star witness, former chairman Kenneth Lay, whose lawyer cited a prosecutorial atmosphere in cancelling his appearance.

Lay's testimony had been expected to be the opening highlight of a packed four days of hearings into the rapid crumbling of the one-time Wall Street darling to the biggest bankruptcy filing in US history.

With a criminal inquiry into Enron's demise under way at the Justice Department and new information emerging about irregular accounting practices, an increasing number of witnesses are refusing to testify before congressional committees.

Ousted Enron Chief Financial Officer Andrew Fastow and former Enron executive Michael Kopper are expected to appear before a House panel on Thursday, but to invoke their right not to testify against themselves.

The same constitutional right against self-incrimination was used almost two weeks ago by David Duncan, a senior partner at accounting firm Andersen, Enron's auditor. Lay, until January 23 Enron's top executive, was due to appear at hearings on Monday and Tuesday but his lawyer advised against it after hearing comments by top lawmakers on Sunday television

talk shows. "These inflammatory statements show that judgments have been reached and the tenor of the hearing will be prosecutorial," Lay's attorney, Earl Silbert, wrote in letters to the Senate Commerce Committee and House Financial Services Committee.

The decision also followed the weekend release of a report by a special committee of Enron's board of directors that blasted Lay, 59, for his lack of oversight.

The report, prepared by a panel led by University of Texas Law School Dean William Powers, also upbraided the board, Enron's top executives and auditor Andersen for failing to stop rogue financing that enriched certain employees while eventually ruining the company.

A former Lay protege, one-time Enron CEO Jeff Skilling, is to testify before the House Energy and Commerce subcommittee on Thursday. A spokeswoman for Skilling did not immediately return calls seeking comment on whether his plans had changed.

"It is clear that the release of the Powers report last night changed everything," said Senator Byron Dorgan, who heads the Senate Commerce subcommittee that was to quiz Lay on Monday. Lay, a friend and financial backer of President Bush, "firmly rejects any allegations that he engaged in wrongful or criminal conduct," Silbert wrote.

Reuters

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 FEB 2002

Enron energy for Democrats

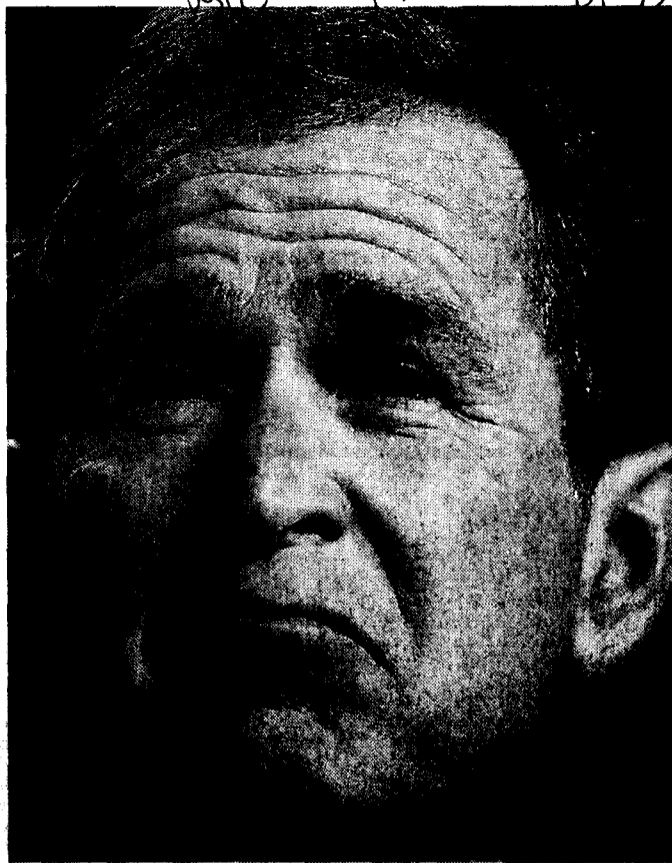
THERE WAS a time, not too long ago, when Republicans and Democrats, the latter especially, were bending over backwards, if not tripping over one another, to give all that the U.S. President, George W. Bush, was asking for. That was immediately after September 11, when the whole nation rallied behind their leader and his response to Al-Qaeda, the Taliban and Osama bin Laden.

Now some four months later, the Democrats are looking for an opening to target Mr. Bush and are cautiously confident of finding one. With the President still in command of foreign policy and having a 82 per cent approval rating, the Democrats are focussing for the most part on domestic policy. They have to up the ante for the simple reason that the Congressional elections of 2002 are not very far away.

If September 11 had not happened, the Democrats may have found themselves in a politically different situation. Having wrested control of the Senate — thanks to a defection — the Democrats were seriously hoping not only to increase their numbers but also take a good shot at wresting control of the House of Representatives. And that would have set the stage for 2004.

Now, their only way out is to challenge this Republican administration on domestic priorities. The Democrats played it politically right by not opposing what Mr. Bush was asking for in the immediate aftermath of September 11, whether it had to do with additional resources for fighting terror, bailing out the airline industry or fine-tuning the anti-terrorism laws in spite of protests from civil rights groups and activists. Now, the Democrats are hoping that the bankruptcy of the Enron Corporation will provide them the ammunition to take on the Bush White House.

The Republicans, in one sense, are in a bind and many are reluctantly coming to realise that what goes around, comes around. It was not that far back in the past that the Republicans and the right wing were trashing the former First Lady, Hillary Rodham



The honeymoon is over.

The Democrats are hoping that Enron will provide them the ammunition to take on the Bush White House, says Sridhar Krishnaswami.

Clinton's health care proposals. Or for that matter looking at the Whitewater "scandal" — a failed real estate deal — as something that could finish off the Clinton administration.

But Whitewater looks like a Saturday school picnic compared to the goings-on in Enron — with the "shreddings" at Arthur Andersen thrown in! While the Houston-based energy giant dished out contributions to both Republicans and Democrats, there is no question that the chief benefactor was the Grand Old Party and the man sitting in the Oval Office.

Enron did not just fold and file for bankruptcy but left hundreds of its employees on the streets, forcing them to hold on to worthless stocks until the very end. Naturally, the Democrats want to know how much, and when, the

White House knew about the goings-on. That apart, the investigative arm of Congress, the General Accounting Office, wants details on the meetings of the Energy Task Force which was headed by the Vice-President, Richard Cheney.

Among other things, the GAO wants to know what kind of inputs the Energy Task Force had and from whom. There is the India angle as well given the controversy over the project in Maharashtra. But the White House has adamantly maintained that all conversations with the President and the Vice-President cannot become public record.

On a broad level, not many are yet challenging the Campaign against Terrorism. But small rumblings have indeed surfaced — even within the administration —

on both the current campaign and the next steps. For instance, some have argued that chasing the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in the caves, mountains and boondocks of Afghanistan is one thing, but expanding this to some kind of a formal war against Iraq is a totally different matter and one that is fraught with dangers.

The Republican administration and the Democrats seem to have drawn the first battle lines. For the Republicans, it is a question of maintaining sufficient momentum on the "war against terror" even as it advances the domestic agenda, or the stimulus package to get the country out of the recession.

And the Democrats are hedging their bets by focussing on the domestic policies while not giving the impression of breaking with the President in his campaign against terrorism. With a public opinion poll giving a 60-point spread in favour of the President in the realm of conducting foreign policy, the Democrats are hoping to steer the debate closer to issues dear to them — social security, health care, education and tax cuts. Worried that the country has returned to deficits, the Democrats are cautiously calling for postponement of some tax breaks that have been agreed upon. But Mr. Bush maintains that the country is still in a recession and hence is looking for more tax breaks to businesses with a view to bringing about more jobs. The Democrats are wary of the President's stimulus package, to say the least.

The Republican administration has also come to see the slow but shifting priorities of the American public. On the eve of his first State of the Union Address, Mr. Bush realised that the American people wanted to hear more about the economy and less about the "war on terrorism".

He is savvy enough to know that despite a very high score on foreign policy, it was the economy that nailed his father in 1992. And, he does not want history to repeat itself either for his party in November 2002 or down the line during the Presidential election of 2004.

THE HINDU
3 FEB 2002

Measures to protect workers

Bush to limit Enron fallout

WSD G-9 2/2

Washington/New York, Feb. 1 (Reuters): Seeking to limit the fallout from Enron Corp's collapse, US President George W. Bush today will propose measures to protect workers like those who lost their pension savings when the energy trader and big Bush campaign contributor unravelled last year.

In a series of proposals to Congress, Bush will call for barring executives from selling company stock during "black-out" periods like the one that kept Enron workers from bailing out while the Houston-based firm's shares plunged last year, a senior White House official said yesterday.

Thousands of Enron workers lost their jobs and pension savings as the company collapsed last year amid allegations that it misled investors about its accounting practices while top executives reaped huge profits by selling their holdings, possibly as lower-level workers were blocked from doing so.

Bush's move underscores the Republicans' concern that the collapse of the company could hurt them in the November 5 congressional elections. Democrats have raised questions about

Bush's close ties to Enron and its top executives and have asked if the firm used influence in secret meetings with Vice-President Dick Cheney to shape a favourable administration energy policy.

Yesterday the White House played down reports that former Enron chairman Kenneth Lay had recommended candidates to fill government posts including Pat Wood, now chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). "These were recommendations early in the administration. Recommendations came from trade organisations, members of Congress and industry officials," said White House spokesman Ken Lisaius. Wood, a Texas Republican, was appointed FERC chairman last summer by Bush with the support of Enron.

Yesterday Wood said his staff had begun looking at allegations of price manipulation by Enron. He would not speculate on the scope of the probe. The probe was demanded by California Gov. Gray Davis and other west coast Democrats who say Enron manipulated wholesale prices to boost profits at the expense of California residents.

THE TELEGRAPH

FEB 2002

'IF TIMID NATIONS DON'T ACT, AMERICA WILL'

Jaish part of terror underworld: Bush

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 30. The United States President, George W. Bush, has warned nations "timid in the face of terror" that if they do not act "America will".

In his State of the Union Address on Tuesday, Mr. Bush said terrorist training camps still existed in at least a dozen countries with a terrorist underworld comprising groups such as the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) which were operating in deserts and jungles.

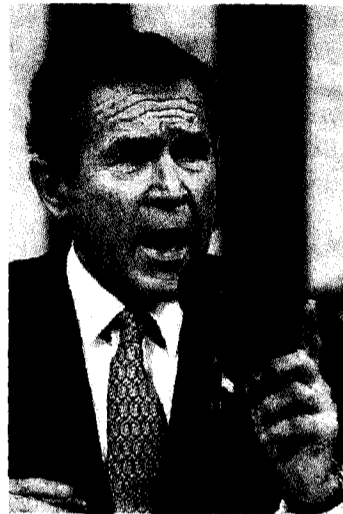
"Our military has put the terror training camps of Afghanistan out of business. Yet camps still exist in at least a dozen countries. A terrorist underworld, including groups such as the Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and the Jaish-e-Mohammad, operates in remote jungles and deserts and hides in the centres of large cities," Mr. Bush said.

The Jaish-e-Mohammad, known to be very active in terrorist attacks against India, including the attack on Parliament on December 13, was officially designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation by the Bush administration last month.

Pat for Musharraf

Mr. Bush, however, had high praise for the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, for acting forcefully against terrorism.

"Many nations are acting forcefully. Pakistan is now cracking down on terror and I admire the strong leadership of President Musharraf. But some governments will be timid in the face of terror. And make no mistake about it: If they do not act, Amer-



ica will," Mr. Bush said to applause from law makers,

dignitaries and special invitees in the House of Representatives.

Towards the end of his speech, Mr. Bush, in another context, referred to India.

He argued that America had a greater objective than eliminating threats and containing resentment — of seeking a just and peaceful world beyond the war on terror.

"In this moment of opportunity, a common danger is easing old rivalries. America is working with Russia and China and India in ways we never have before to achieve peace and prosperity... Together with friends and allies from Europe to Asia, and Africa to Latin America we will demonstrate that forces of terror cannot stop the momentum of freedom," Mr. Bush said.

India keen on cooperation in counter-terrorism

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 30. India today said that it was looking forward to strengthen cooperation with the U.S. against international terrorism.

Asked to comment on the state of the union address by the U.S. President, George W. Bush, the spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Nirupama Rao, said that Mr. Bush's speech had clearly spelt out the dangers posed by terrorism.

On the praise showered by Mr. Bush on the Pakistan President, Pervez Musharraf, she said that these observations had to be seen in a larger context. Pakistan came in for comment because of terrorist groups, their networks had found sanctuaries in that country. "Terrorism is a serious problem in Pakistan", she said.

India was looking for a long-term commitment by Pakistan against cross-border terrorism. Pakistan was yet to take meaningful steps to combat terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, she said.

THE HINDU

31 JAN 2002

U.S. BUDGET / RECESSION WILL BE OVERCOME, SAYS PRESIDENT

War on terror only begun, says Bush

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 30. The U.S. President, George W Bush, has vowed to go after terrorists and terrorism even while cautioning that the campaign will not be finished during his tenure.

Calling terrorists "ticking time bombs", Mr. Bush said, "Our war on terror is well begun, but it is only begun. This campaign may not be finished on our watch, yet it must be and will be waged on our watch." In his first State of the Union Address, Mr. Bush — with the Vice-President, Dick Cheney, sitting behind him — dealt at length on winning the war against terrorism and pulling the country out of the economic recession. "...Our nation is at war, our economy is in recession and the civilised world faces unprecedented dangers. Yet the state of our Union has never been stronger," the President said to a standing ovation in the packed House of Representatives. "We have clear priorities and we must act at home with the same purpose and resolve we have shown overseas. We will prevail in the war and we will defeat this recession," Mr. Bush said.

With the First Lady, Laura Bush, and the interim leader of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, who was a special invitee, listening on, Mr. Bush said American would "continue to be steadfast and patient and persistent" in the pursuit of two "great objectives" — shutting down terrorist camps and bringing terrorists to justice; preventing terrorists and regimes seeking weapons of mass destruction from threatening the United States and the world.

Mr. Bush had a blunt warning for countries like North Korea, Iraq and Iran — States the President described as trying to acquire weapons of mass destruction, exporting terror and silencing their own people. "We'll be deliberate; yet time is not on our side. I will not wait on events while dangers gather. I will not stand by



A FIGHT TO FINISH: The U.S. President, George W. Bush, greets members of his Cabinet following his State of the Union Address in Washington on Tuesday. (From left): the Secretary of State Colin Powell, the Secretary of Treasury Paul O'Neill, the Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld, the Secretary of Agriculture Ann M. Veneman, the Secretary of Commerce Don Evans, and the Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao. — AFP

as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons," Mr. Bush warned.

Not once did the President mention Osama bin Laden by name, but at the outset, Mr. Bush outlined what had been achieved thus far in Afghanistan. "The American flag flies again over our Embassy in Kabul. Terrorists who once occupied Afghanistan now occupy cells at Guantanamo Bay. And terrorist leaders who urged followers to sacrifice their lives are running for their own," Mr. Bush said.

With an approval rating of 82 per cent, Mr.

Bush, as expected, urged Congress to get on with the economic stimulus plan that included assistance for the unemployed and tax breaks for businesses to generate jobs. "When America works, America prospers, so my economic security plan can be summed up in one word: Jobs," Mr. Bush said. Calling on Americans to commit themselves to two years of volunteer service and proposing a domestic version of the Peace Corps, Mr. Bush outlined the doubling of funding for a sustained strategy on the homeland security front which would focus on four key areas — bio-terrorism, emergency response, airport and border security and improved intelligence.

31 JAN 2002

THE HINDU

Bush declines to release Enron papers

Vijay Dutt & AFP
Washington/London, Jan 29

US PRESIDENT George W Bush has declined to hand over documents related to White House contacts with failed energy giant Enron, calling a Congressional request for them an "encroachment" on the executive.

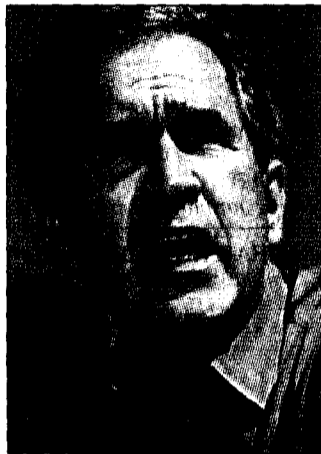
Bush echoed comments by Vice President Dick Cheney, head of a White House task force to set energy policy, who indicated on Sunday he would not agree to requests by the General Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative arm of Congress, to have access to documents.

"I view the GAO (request) like the Vice President does; it's an encroachment on the executive branch's ability to conduct business," Bush told reporters at the White House.

Yesterday's remarks came at the beginning of a week when the head of the GAO is expected to decide whether to take the White House to court to force the administration to release the documents. The documents would contain information about meetings with executives of Enron Corp. The suit would be the first time the GAO has sued the executive branch.

Meanwhile, Cheney revealed yesterday a key environmental policy request made by the now bankrupt energy giant Enron before a special Presidential task force on energy policy had been rejected by the Bush administration.

Cheney has acknowledged meeting with top Enron officials six times when he worked on the administration's energy policy that was unveiled last year. The admission has given rise to speculation that Enron,



GEORGE W BUSH

known for its lavish political campaign donations, exerted excessive influence on the energy task force headed by Cheney.

But the Vice-President, in an interview with CNN television, dismissed the allegations as having no basis in fact.

Enron link haunts Labour Party in UK

The Labour Party in UK is facing inquiries into its alleged links with Enron. The Tory Party has contacted Cabinet Secretary Sir Richard Wilson to inquire into claims that Enron paid thousands of pounds to meet senior British ministers.

Tory MPs are also demanding an inquiry into the Labour Party's "close relations" with the accountancy firm, Arthur Andersen. The controversy over the alleged links of Enron with Labour was triggered by Ralph Hodge, who was head of Enron's European division between 1997 and 2000. It was in May 1997 that the Labour Party under Tony Blair demolished the Tories to sweep into power.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

30 JAN 2002

Bush rejects Powell suggestion on detenus

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 29. The U.S. President, George W. Bush, has rejected the suggestion of his Secretary of State, Colin Powell, that the captured Al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters be designated "Prisoners of War" and thereby making relevant Geneva Conventions applicable. "These are killers; these are terrorists. They're illegal combatants", Mr. Bush remarked after a morning meeting of his National Security Council where the subject was apparently discussed.

Last Friday, *The Washington Times* reported that the White House Counsel had sent a memo to the President saying that Gen. Powell had requested the President to reconsider his decision on the detainees in Guantanamo Bay base in Cuba. Most members of the President's National Security Team, the Defence Secretary especially, are against designating the detenus as prisoners of war. At the same time, the administration here is playing down stories of a rift within the Cabinet on the issue.

"The President always wants to encourage people in his Cabinet to come to him with their opin-

ions and thoughts and do so in a manner that will respect their privacy, so he can get more of it", the White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer, said on Monday.

Meanwhile, the President after his meeting with the Interim Leader of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, made a significant announcement that the U.S. would be helping that Central Asian country to build a military and train its soldiers. Mr. Bush made it clear that the U.S. was not interested _ even if Kabul is very much so _ in joining the multinational peace-keeping force. For a visit for which the White House rolled out the red carpet, Mr. Karzai was also promised an additional \$ 50 millions line of credit intended to fund U.S. private sector projects. Washington has also released \$ 220 millions in frozen assets.

"I reaffirm to you today that the United States will continue to be a friend to the Afghan people in all the challenges that lie ahead", Mr. Bush told Mr. Karzai at the Rose Garden. Prior to his White House visit and discussions with the President and members of his Cabinet, Mr. Karzai raised the black, red and green flag of Afghanistan in the embassy premises.

THE HINDU

30 JAN 2002

Cheney no to Enron papers

28/11

HG-10

Washington, January 28

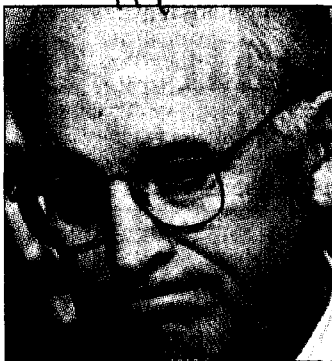
WSI

VICE-PRESIDENT Dick Cheney said today that the White House was prepared to go to court to fight the release of documents demanded by Congress as part of the investigation into any influence the Enron Corporation had in formulating the Bush administration's energy policy.

Cheney said that the General Accounting Office, the agency demanding the documents, was overstepping its authority and that he had a right to keep the documents secret to preserve his ability to get "unvarnished" advice from outside consultants.

David M Walker, the head of the General Accounting Office, responded said that it was now "highly likely" that he would file a lawsuit against the Bush administration if Cheney did not turn over the documents by the end of this week. Of the vice-president's assertion that the agency was overstepping its bounds, Walker, the Comptroller General of the US, replied, "Talk is cheap."

It would be the first time that the accounting office, the investigative arm of Congress, sued another Government department for not cooperating with an inquiry. Cheney said that it was the right of the president and vice president to keep secret meetings like those that Cheney and his energy task force had over the last year with Enron



DICK CHENEY

executives as the administration devised its energy policy.

"What I object to," Cheney said "and what the President's objected to, and what we've told GAO we won't do, is make it impossible for me or future vice-presidents to ever have a conversation in confidence with anybody without having to tell a member of Congress what we talked about and what was said."

At issue is how much Enron influenced the Bush energy plan, which eases environmental rules, opens public land to drilling and provides tax incentives to energy companies for exploration. A lawsuit would increase pressure on Cheney, who is under criticism from Democrats for his relationship with Enron, the giant energy trading company that filed for bankruptcy protection.

PTT

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Enron, the human refinery

FROM JOE STEPHENS
AND PETER BEHR

Washington, Jan. 27: Enron Corp vice-chairman J. Clifford Baxter resigned quietly last May, accepting a pat on the back and quietly moving on. He took along millions of dollars from the sale of stock he had amassed over a decade at the giant Houston trading company.

His last post at Enron was that of vice-chairman. As in other aspects of Enron's culture, the appearance did not match reality. Enron insiders called the position the "ejection seat," an honorary post that Enron executives held for a short while before a forced exit. Baxter's predecessor was a one-time star who had lost a power struggle to become chief executive.

At Enron, losers fell by the wayside but victors stayed in the game, drawn by hopes of million-dollar bonuses and rewards that went to those who scored the biggest deals. Three other senior executives preceded Baxter out of the company by a few months; seven more would follow, capped last week by Chairman Kenneth Lay.

That was one indication of Enron's winner-take-all culture. Intense pressure to keep Enron

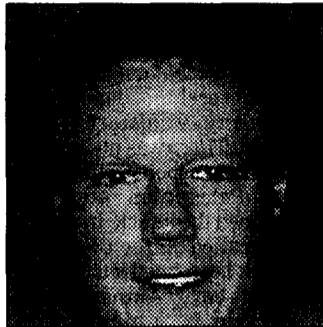
stock on an ever-rising curve induced top executives to take greater and greater risks with investments and accounting procedures, past and present employees said. The result, they said, was to inflate revenues and submerge growing debts, creating, in the words of former manager Margaret Ceconi, "a house of cards."

"The driver was this unbelievable desire to keep portraying Enron as something very different and keep the track record going and going," said Forrest Hoglund, who ran Enron's oil and gas exploration division before buying out Enron's stake in 1999.

"As long as it was magic and it was working, that would be all right," he said. "I always felt the first time they reported a down quarter (for profits) it would come apart."

In October, Enron stunned Wall Street by reporting that down quarter, an \$618 million third-quarter loss, and the first of many accounting revelations that would destroy the confidence of customers and investors. On December 2, it filed the largest bankruptcy petition in US history. Investors lost billions of dollars and thousands of people lost their jobs.

Baxter will never testify



J. Clifford Baxter. (AP/PTI)

about what he knew and what he feared in the months before Enron's collapse. On Friday, police believe, Baxter stepped into his Mercedes, pointed a .38-calibre pistol to his head and fired. Authorities declared the multimillionaire with the 70-foot yacht dead at 43. Police, who classified the death as a suicide, would not reveal the contents of a note Baxter left behind.

Enron was a human refinery, where managers wrung their hands over their advancing age and feared their superiors would deem them too meek. Some worried that not giving enough to the chairman's favourite political candidate could send their careers into a dive. Some even detected a menacing tone in letters urging them to offer up large

contributions to the United Way.

"One day, you are viewed with favour, and the next day you are not. You know who is in the in-crowd and who is not," former Enron worker Sally Ison said. "You want to continue to be liked in that organisation. You do everything you can do to keep that."

Until last fall, Enron bragged about its pressure-cooker culture, said Peter Fusaro, whose consulting company, Global Change Associates, issued an in-depth analysis of Enron last August.

LOS ANGELES TIMES-
WASHINGTON POST NEWS SERVICE

THE TELEGRAPH

28 JAN 2002

Bush under fire on Enron deal

NEW YORK: Americans perceive Republicans as far more entangled in the Enron controversy than Democrats, and their suspicions are growing that the Bush administration is hiding something or lying about its own dealings with the Enron corporation before the company filed for bankruptcy protection, according to a poll.

A *New York Times/CBS News* polls shows that even among Republicans, a majority believed that the administration had not been forthcoming about its dealings with Enron. That perception could pose a threat to Republican candidates in the mid-term election this year, and undermine the White House drive to portray the Enron collapse as affecting Republicans and Democrats equally. *WSO 11-15*

On the U.S. war on terror, most Americans said the success of war in Afghanistan would be determined by whether Osama bin Laden is captured or killed as President Bush had promised. A majority favoured expanding war to other countries where terrorists might be hiding, including Iraq, Somalia and the Philippines.

In a demonstration of how the public's concerns have shifted in recent weeks, the poll says the economy has now supplanted battling terrorism—albeit by a slight margin—as the issue people want their elected officials to make a top priority. They fear that the budget deficit is too much of a burden for the nation, and six in ten favour postponing the Bush tax cut rather than incurring a deficit.

The polls shows President Bush's impressive approval rating of 82 per cent has not diminished since the terrorist attacks. As Bush prepares to deliver his first state of the Union address on Tuesday, neither party is seen as having an edge on keeping the country prosperous, improving education, balancing the Federal budget or making the proper decisions about how to spend tax-payers' money.

The poll indicates that Bush must also contend with the twin political predicaments posed by Enron and economy. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

28 JAN 2002

Bush proposes \$37.7 billion security budget

WS 1
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Reuters

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24. — Saying "we're still under attack," President George Bush today proposed a 2003 homeland security budget of \$ 37.7 billion — almost double that of current levels — to protect the USA against future attacks.

The budget, which Mr Bush outlined in a White House speech to cities' mayors and county leaders, would provide substantial increases in areas the White House said needs immediate attention in response to the 11 September attacks.

These areas include police, firefighters and emergency medical teams; securing U.S. borders, combating bio-terrorism, strengthening intelligence sharing, improving transportation security and supporting other national defense-related initiatives.

Yesterday, Mr Bush also proposed the largest budget increase in military spending for two decades amid his ongoing

Cost of Pak support

WASHINGTON, Jan. 24. — USA's commitment to help cover Pakistan's military costs in support of US forces in Afghanistan already totals \$ 350 million and is running into \$ 100 million every month, media reports said.

The Bush administration, they said, has been struggling to find a way to make money available and win approval of Congress, which "has been kept largely in the dark about the costs."

Reiterating the reports, the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Republican Congressman Mr Jim Kolbe said he first became aware of the costs when US Ambassador to Pakistan Ms Wendy Chamberlin raised the issue with him during a recent meeting in Islamabad. — PTI

war on terrorism.

"We're still under attack," Mr Bush said. "They still want to

come after us. These are evil people, that are relentless in their desire to hurt those who love freedom. And since we're the bastion of freedom, the beacon of freedom, we're their target."

The proposed increased spending comes amid political finger-pointing over a return to U.S. budget deficits as Democrats complain Bush's 1.35 trillion dollar tax cut last year has squeezed spending options.

Mr Bush, however, said his homeland security budget is the start of an initiative that will last throughout his administration and recognizes that "the first minutes after an attack are the most hopeful for saving lives." Tomorrow, Mr Bush is to announce border security provisions during a trip to Maine and provisions to combat bio-terrorism and improve intelligence will be rolled out later, a White House official said.

Meanwhile, the Homeland Security director, Mr Tom Ridge, said federal aid will continue year after year.

THE STATESMAN

25 JAN 2002

Handover of five on bargain table

GUESS WHO'S GIVEN HIM A BLOODY NOSE



President George W. Bush choked on a pretzel, fainted and fell off a couch in his bedroom while watching a football game, leaving an angry scrape on his left cheek (Reuters picture above).

Bush made light of Sunday afternoon's incident as he left for a tour on Monday, saying he had "hit the deck" and woke up to find his dogs, Barney and Spot, looking at him with concern. "My mother always said when you're eating pretzels, chew before you swallow. Listen to your mother," Bush told reporters before boarding the helicopter. Pretzel, the "all-American" snack, is a crisp, salted biscuit in the shape of a knot (See Page 4).

Asked what had happened, Bush replied: "I hit the deck and woke up and there was Barney and Spot showing a lot of concern. I didn't realise what happened until I looked in the mirror ... my glasses cut the side of my face."

"I feel great," he added, noting he had had "good" blood pressure on Monday morning and looked forward to his trip.

The episode, Bush's first health scare as President, failed to dull his sense of humour or dampen his high spirits. En route to the

Mississippi River town of Moline, Bush had a gift and some good advice for reporters aboard Air Force One. Scrawled on a jumbo bag of pretzels the President sent to the press cabin were the words: "From POTUS (President of the United States) ... Chew slowly."

Other than an abrasion on his left cheek the size of a half dollar and a small bruise on his lower lip, apparently sustained when he fell onto the carpeted floor, Bush quickly regained consciousness and suffered no ill effects, his doctor Richard Tubb said.

Bush, who runs a seven-minute mile, had complained over the weekend of being "a little off his game" and said he felt as if he were coming down with a cold. That, combined with having just eaten a pretzel that he failed to swallow properly, caused his heart rate to slow and, as a result, he fainted, Tubb explained.

"I did not find anything to indicate it was serious whatsoever," he added. Tests were normal and no medications were prescribed. After the incident, Bush, along with the First Lady, had soup and salad.

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Jan. 14: Pakistan may hand over five or six of the criminals among the 20 listed by India for extradition as proof of General Pervez Musharraf's sincerity in implementing his vision outlined in an address to his nation on Saturday.

None of those handed over to India will be Pakistani nationals. Nor are they likely to be connected even remotely to any subversive activity in Kashmir.

This road map for de-escalation of tension between India and Pakistan is the result of home minister L.K. Advani's visit to Washington.

During intense give-and-take, bargaining and bouncing of ideas at various levels during Advani's stay here, it was conveyed to the Americans that nothing short of definite action on the part of Musharraf would satisfy New Delhi.

When secretary of state Colin Powell meets Musharraf this week, he will convey American fears that terrorists in Pakistan, who are now uncompromisingly opposed to the ruling junta in Islamabad, will engineer an Indo-Pakistan conflict through another daring attack on India similar to the one on Parliament.

It will be Powell's argument that confidence-building with Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee is needed before such an eventuality if Musharraf wants to avoid a war with India.

An immediate — and easiest — way for Musharraf to build such confidence is to hand over to India some of the people on Delhi's list of 20 who are unlikely to politically destabilise Musharraf. The Americans appear to have been prodded towards this course by Advani's logic, combined with the grim tone of army chief General S. Padmanabhan's news conference last week.

Padmanabhan made it clear that India's war preparations are for real. At the same time, Advani conveyed the chilling assessment to the Americans that



A sealed Lashkar office in Islamabad. (Reuters)

an Indo-Pakistan war would be triggered neither by Musharraf nor by Vajpayee, but by terrorists, who wanted such a war to divert America's concentration away from al Qaida and the Taliban.

Powell is leaving for South Asia tomorrow, convinced that if some confidence-building is initiated between Musharraf and Vajpayee, the Prime Minister will be able to ask Indians to give Pakistan's President the benefit of the doubt in any immediate terrorist attack on India.

The most logical and immediate confidence-building measure would be for Pakistan to hand over criminals who are Indian passport-holders into Delhi's custody.

Advani has conveyed to the Bush administration the view that without actions to prove Musharraf's sincerity, he cannot be absolved of responsibility for acts of terror. The dominant view here is that if Powell asks Musharraf to act on India's list of 20, at least a quarter way he is in no position to defy the US.

Advani pointed out to the Americans, who pleaded for time on behalf of Musharraf, that President George W. Bush hardly gave the Pakistani general breathing time before he was asked to train his guns on the Taliban after September 11. He said time had already run out on Musharraf as far as terrorism against India was concerned.

Mix-up stink in Dutch deaths

FROM MUKHTAR AHMAD

Srinagar, Jan. 14: All papers of the two Dutch shot dead by the Border Security Force have been found to be in order, strengthening a perception that they were tourists who had been mistaken for militants.

A tourism department official said the slain foreigners had registered themselves as students with the foreign registration office of the state intelligence "as all foreigners visiting Kashmir have to do".

The disclosure shoots down suggestions that the two — Bakiovi Ahmad and El-Hasanowi Khalid — had sneaked into Kashmir. They would not have registered themselves "if they were involved in any militant activity", the official pointed out.

Police sources confirmed that the two had landed in Kashmir on January 6 with their passports and visas in order. They had set out from Amsterdam. If it is established that the Dutchmen were in fact students visiting Kashmir, it will be a diplomatic embarrassment for Delhi, which has been confronting Pakistani allegations of human rights violations in the Valley. The incident will also hurt Jammu and Kashmir government's renewed efforts to revive tourism.

Few in Kashmir are buying the BSF's version that the two were *fidayeen* militants. A BSF spokesman today said they had attacked a patrol party in a hotel close to their camp with knives, injuring two security men. "The troops then opened fire on the two *fidayeen* and killed them on the spot", he added.

Suicide note points to young pilot's support for Osama

WASHINGTON: The student pilot who rammed a small plane into a skyscraper in Tampa, Florida, on Saturday had left a suicide note expressing sympathy for terror suspect Osama bin Laden and support for the September 11 terrorist attacks, police officials said.



Charles Bishop

Bennie Holder, the Tampa police chief, said the suicide note which was found in the pocket of 15-year-old Charles Bishop clearly expressed sympathy towards Bin Laden and the September 11 terrorist strikes.

Declining to elaborate on the contents of the note, Mr Holder said Bishop "clearly stated in it that he had acted alone without any help from anyone else". (Agencies)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

8 JAN 2002

Plane crashes into Florida skyscraper

TAMPA (Florida): A 15-year-old student pilot took off in a small plane without permission and crashed into a skyscraper after ignoring a coast guard helicopter's signals to land, authorities said.

Officials quickly discounted terrorism, but the televised image of a plane blasting a hole in the side of a skyscraper was a chilling reminder of the World Trade Center attacks. The plane's tail dangled near the 20th floor of the 40-storey bank of America building.

One person was killed, but officials would not immediately confirm it was the pilot, Charles J Bishop. It was unknown whether anyone in the building was injured.

The crash occurred after Bishop's grandmother brought him to the National Aviation Flight School for a 5 p.m. (0330 IST) flying lesson, said Marianne Pasha, a police spokeswoman. She said an instructor told Bishop to check the

plane's equipment before the lesson.

"The next thing the instructor knew he was gone," Pasha said. Bishop had been taking lessons for two years, she said.

Air traffic controllers at the St Petersburg-Clearwater Airport notified the coast guard that the

four-seat 2000 Cessna 172R had taken off without clearance, said Coast Guard Lt Charlotte Pittman.

A coast guard helicopter intercepted the plane and attempted to give the pilot visual signals to land at a small airport, but the pilot did not respond, Pittman said.

She said the plane was only a

few metres from the helicopter when it was signalled to land. Pittman said she had no doubt the pilot understood what the Coast Guard helicopter was indicating.

Sheriff's Sgt Greg Tita said the plane briefly breached air space at Mcdill air force base, home of central command, which is running the war against terrorism in Afghanistan.

Two F-15s were dispatched from homestead air reserve base, about 400 kilometres southeast of Tampa, as a precaution, said Capt Kirstin Reimann at the North American Aerospace defence command. Reimann declined to say whether they reached the scene before the crash.

In Portland, Oregon, where President George W Bush was touring a job center, White House spokesman Scott McClellan said "there is no indication" of terrorism. (AP)

Student pilot bartered for flights

PALM HARBOUR (Florida): The high school freshman who stole the small airplane and crashed it into a high-rise building was a quiet boy who kept to himself and bartered for his flight lessons by cleaning airplanes.

Flight school officials said Charles J. Bishop, 15, was well versed in the operations at National Aviation Academy, where he had been taking lessons since March 2001.

He was a year shy of being able to fly alone and two years too young to earn a pilot's licence. It's not unusual though, for 15-year-olds to take flight lessons, said flight school attorney Michael Cronin.

Bishop apparently had no disciplinary problems and neighbours in Palm Harbor, a middle-class community about 40 km west of Tampa, said he didn't stand out. (AP)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

- 7 JAN 2002