

In addition to the five articles listed below there are
6-an article on Afghanistan from a US citizen resident there long term and
7- a Former Israeli Prime Minister's report

-----Original Message-----

From: cepal <cepal@cyberus.ca>

To: CEPAL <cepal@cyberus.ca>

Date: Friday, 21 September 2001 2:56

Subject: Cepal Mailing - September 20, 2001

Cepal Mailing - September 20, 2001

Contents

- 1- Collective Passion. By Edward Said, Al-Ahram Weekly, 20-26 Sept 01
 - 2- INTERVIEW WITH NOAM CHOMSKY, By Radio B92 in Belgrade, 9-18-2001
 - 3- Bush is walking into a trap, Robert Fisk, The Independent, 16 Sept 01
 - 4- Taliban finds few Muslim friends , Robert Fisk, The Independent, Sept 18 01
 - 5- What's not being reported re Palestinian response to the tragedy, Al-Awda
-

1- Collective Passion. By Edward Said, Al-Ahram Weekly, 20-26 Sept 01

Spectacular horror of the sort that struck New York (and to a lesser degree Washington) has ushered in a new world of unseen, unknown assailants, terror missions without political message, senseless destruction. For the residents of this wounded city, the consternation, fear, and sustained sense of outrage and shock will certainly continue for a long time, as will the genuine sorrow and affliction that such carnage has cruelly imposed on so many. New Yorkers have been fortunate that Mayor Rudy Giuliani, a normally rebarbative and unpleasantly combative, even retrograde figure, known for his virulently Zionist views, has rapidly attained Churchillian status. Calmly, un sentimentally, and with extraordinary compassion he has marshaled the city's heroic police, fire and emergency services to admirable effect and, alas, with huge loss of life. Giuliani's was the first voice to caution against panic and jingoistic attacks on the city's large Arab and Muslim communities, the first to express the common sense of anguish, the first to press everyone to try to resume life after the shattering blows.

Would that that were all. The national television reporting has of course brought the horror of those dreadful winged juggernauts into every household, unremittingly, insistently, not always edifyingly. Most commentary has stressed, indeed magnified the expected and the predictable in what most Americans feel: terrible loss, anger, outrage, a sense of violated vulnerability, a desire for vengeance and unrestrained retribution. There has been nothing to speak of on all the major television channels but repeated reminders of what happened, of who the terrorists were (as yet nothing proven, which hasn't prevented the accusations being reiterated hour after hour), of how America has been attacked, and so on. Beyond formulaic expressions of grief and patriotism, every politician and accredited pundit or expert has dutifully repeated how we shall not be defeated, not be deterred, not stop until terrorism is exterminated. This is a war against terrorism, everyone says, but where, on what fronts, for what concrete ends? No answers are provided, except the vague suggestion that the Middle East and Islam are what "we" are up against, and that terrorism must be destroyed.

What is most depressing, however, is how little time is spent trying to understand America's role in the world and its direct involvement in the complex reality beyond the two coasts that have for so long kept the rest of the world extremely distant and virtually out of the average American's mind. You'd think that "America" was a sleeping giant rather than a superpower almost constantly at war, or in some sort of conflict, all over the Islamic domains. Osama Bin Laden's name and face have become so numbingly familiar to Americans as in effect to obliterate any history he and his shadowy followers may have had (e.g. as useful conscripts in the jihad raised 20 years ago by the US against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan) before they became stock symbols of everything loathsome and hateful to the collective imagination. Inevitably then, collective passions are being funnelled into a drive for war that uncannily resembles Captain Ahab in pursuit of Moby Dick, rather than what is in fact going on: an imperial power injured at home for the first time, pursuing its interests systematically in what has become a suddenly reconfigured geography of conflict, without clear borders, or visible actors. Manichean symbols and apocalyptic scenarios are bandied about, with future consequences and rhetorical restraint thrown to the winds.

Rational understanding of the situation is what is needed now, not more drum-beating.

George Bush and his team clearly want the latter, not the former. Yet to most people in the Islamic and Arab worlds, the official US is synonymous with arrogant power, known mainly for its sanctimoniously munificent support not only of Israel but of numerous repressive Arab regimes, and its inattentiveness even to the possibility of dialogue with secular movements and people who have real grievances. Anti-Americanism in this context is not based on a hatred of modernity or technology-envy as accredited pundits like Thomas Friedman keep repeating; it is based on a narrative of concrete interventions, specific depredations and, in the cases of the Iraqi people's suffering under US-imposed sanctions and US support for the 34-year-old Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, cruel and inhumane policies administered with a stony coldness.

Israel is now cynically exploiting the American catastrophe by intensifying its military occupation and oppression of the Palestinians. Since 11 September, Israeli military forces have invaded Jenin and Jericho and have repeatedly bombed Gaza, Ramallah, Beit Sahour and Beit Jala, exacting great civilian casualties and enormous material damage. All of this, of course, is done brazenly with US weaponry and the usual lying cant about fighting terrorism. Israel's supporters in the US have resorted to hysterical cries like "we are all Israelis now," making the connection between the World Trade Center and Pentagon bombings and Palestinian attacks on Israel an absolute conjunction of "world terrorism," in which Ben Laden and Arafat are interchangeable entities. What might have been a moment for Americans to reflect on the probable causes of what took place, which many Palestinians, Muslims and Arabs have condemned, has been turned into a huge propaganda triumph for Sharon; Palestinians are simply not equipped to defend themselves against both Israeli occupation in its ugliest and most violent forms and the vicious defamation of their national struggle for liberation.

Political rhetoric in the US has overridden these things by flinging about words like "terrorism" and "freedom" whereas, of course, such large abstractions have mostly hidden sordid material interests, the efficacy of the oil, defence and Zionist lobbies now consolidating their hold on the entire Middle East and an age-old religious hostility to (and ignorance of) "Islam" that takes new forms every day. The commonest thing is to get TV commentary, run stories, hold forums, or announce studies on Islam and violence or on Arab terrorism, or any such thing, using the predictable experts (the likes of Judith Miller, Fouad Ajami, and Steven Emerson) to pontificate and throw around generalities without context or real history. Why no one thinks of holding seminars on Christianity (or Judaism for that matter) and violence is probably too obvious to ask.

It is important to remember (although this is not at all mentioned) that China will soon catch up with the US in oil consumption, and it has become even more urgent for the US to control both Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea oil supplies more tightly: an attack on Afghanistan, including the use of former Soviet Central Asian republics as staging grounds, therefore, consolidates a strategic arc for the US from the Gulf to the northern oil fields that will be very difficult for anyone in the future to pry loose. As pressure on Pakistan mounts daily, we can be certain that a great deal of local instability and unrest will follow in the wake of the events of 11 September.

Intellectual responsibility, however, requires a still more critical sense of the

actuality. There has been terror, of course, and nearly every struggling modern movement at some stage has relied on terror. This was as true of Mandela's ANC as it was of all the others, Zionism included. And yet, bombing defenceless civilians with F-16s and helicopter gunships has the same structure and effect as more conventional nationalist terror. What is especially bad about all terror is when it is attached to religious and political abstractions and reductive myths that keep veering away from history and sense. This is where the secular consciousness has to step forward and try to make itself felt, whether in the US or in the Middle East. No cause, no God, no abstract idea can justify the mass slaughter of innocents, most particularly when only a small group of people are in charge of such actions and feel themselves to represent the cause without having been elected or having a real mandate to do so.

Besides, much as it has been quarrelled over by Muslims, there isn't a single Islam: there are Islams, just as there are Americas. This diversity is true of all traditions, religions or nations, even though some of their adherents have futilely tried to draw boundaries around themselves and pin their creeds down neatly. Yet history is far more complex and contradictory than to be represented by demagogues who are much less representative than either their followers or opponents claim. The trouble with religious or moral fundamentalists is that today, their primitive ideas of revolution and resistance, including a willingness to kill and be killed, seem all too easily attached to technological sophistication and what appear to be gratifying acts of horrifying symbolic savagery. (With astonishing prescience in 1907, Joseph Conrad drew the portrait of the archetypal terrorist, whom he calls laconically "the Professor" in his novel *The Secret Agent*; this is a man whose sole concern is to perfect a detonator that will work under any circumstances and whose handiwork results in a bomb exploded by a poor boy sent, unknowingly, to destroy the Greenwich Observatory as a strike against "pure science.") The New York and Washington suicide bombers seem to have been middle-class, educated men, not poor refugees. Instead of getting a wise leadership that stresses education, mass mobilisation and patient organisation in the service of a cause, the poor and the desperate are often conned into the magical thinking and quick bloody solutions that such appalling models provide, wrapped in lying religious claptrap. This remains true in the Middle East generally, Palestine in particular, but also in the United States, surely the most religious of all countries. It is also a major failure of the class of secular intellectuals not to have redoubled their efforts to provide analysis and models to offset the undoubted sufferings of the large mass of their people, immiserated and impoverished by globalism and an unyielding militarism with scarcely anything to turn to except blind violence and vague promises of future salvation.

On the other hand, immense military and economic power such as the US possesses is no guarantee of wisdom or moral vision, particularly when obduracy is thought of as a virtue and exceptionalism believed to be the national destiny. Sceptical and humane voices have been largely unheard in the present crisis, as "America" girds itself for a long war to be fought somewhere out there, along with allies who have been pressed into service on very uncertain grounds and for imprecise ends. We need to step back from the imaginary thresholds that supposedly separate people from each other into supposedly clashing civilisations and re-examine the labels, reconsider the limited resources available, decide somehow to share our fates with each other as in fact cultures mostly have done, despite the bellicose cries and creeds.

“Islam” and “the West” are simply inadequate as banners to follow blindly. Some will run behind them, of course, but for future generations to condemn themselves to prolonged war and suffering without so much as a critical pause, without looking at interdependent histories of injustice and oppression, without trying for common emancipation and mutual enlightenment seems far more willful than necessary. Demonisation of the Other is not a sufficient basis for any kind of decent politics — certainly not now, when the roots of terror in injustice and misery can be addressed and the terrorists themselves easily isolated, deterred or otherwise put out of business. It takes patience and education, but is more worth the investment than still greater levels of large-scale violence and suffering. The immediate prospects are for destruction and suffering on a very large scale, with US policymakers milking the apprehensions and anxieties of their constituencies with cynical assurance that few will attempt a counter- campaign against the inflamed patriotism and belligerent war-mongering that has for a time postponed reflection, understanding, even common sense. Nevertheless, those of us with a possibility for reaching people who are willing to listen — and there are many such people, in the US, Europe, and the Middle East, at least — must try to do so as rationally and as patiently as possible.

2- INTERVIEW WITH NOAM CHOMSKY, By Radio B92 in Belgrade, 9-18-2001

Q: : Why do you think these attacks happened?

Chomsky: To answer the question we must first identify the perpetrators of the crimes. It is generally assumed, plausibly, that their origin is the Middle East region, and that the attacks probably trace back to the Osama Bin Laden network, a widespread and complex organization, doubtless inspired by Bin Laden but not necessarily acting under his control. Let us assume that this is true. Then to answer your question a sensible person would try to ascertain Bin Laden's views, and the sentiments of the large reservoir of supporters he has throughout the region. About all of this, we have a great deal of information. Bin Laden has been interviewed extensively over the years by highly reliable Middle East specialists, notably the most eminent correspondent in the region, Robert Fisk (London _Independent_), who has intimate knowledge of the entire region and direct experience over decades. A Saudi Arabian millionaire, Bin Laden became a militant Islamic leader in the war to drive the Russians out of Afghanistan. He was one of the many religious fundamentalist extremists recruited, armed, and financed by the CIA and their allies in Pakistani intelligence to cause maximal harm to the Russians — quite possibly delaying their withdrawal, many analysts suspect — though whether he personally happened to have direct contact with the CIA is unclear, and not particularly important. Not surprisingly, the CIA preferred the most fanatic and cruel fighters they could mobilize. The end result was to “destroy a moderate regime and create a fanatical one, from groups recklessly financed by the Americans” (_London Times_ correspondent Simon Jenkins, also a specialist on the region). These “Afghanis” as they are called (many, like Bin Laden, not from Afghanistan) carried out terror operations across the border in Russia, but they terminated these after Russia withdrew. Their war was not against Russia, which they despise, but against the Russian occupation and Russia's crimes against Muslims.

The “Afghanis” did not terminate their activities, however. They joined Bosnian Muslim forces in the Balkan Wars; the US did not object, just as it tolerated Iranian support for them, for complex reasons that we need not pursue here, apart from noting that concern for the grim fate of the Bosnians was not prominent among them. The “Afghanis” are also fighting the Russians in Chechnya, and, quite possibly, are involved in carrying out terrorist attacks in Moscow and elsewhere in Russian territory. Bin Laden and his “Afghanis” turned against the US in 1990 when they established permanent bases in Saudi Arabia — from his point of view, a counterpart to the Russian occupation of Afghanistan, but far more significant because of Saudi Arabia's special status as the guardian of the holiest shrines.

Bin Laden is also bitterly opposed to the corrupt and repressive regimes of the region, which he regards as “un-Islamic,” including the Saudi Arabian regime, the most extreme Islamic fundamentalist regime in the world, apart from the Taliban, and a close US ally since its origins. Bin Laden despises the US for its support of these regimes. Like others in the region, he is also outraged by long-standing US support for Israel's brutal military occupation, now in its 35th year: Washington's decisive diplomatic, military, and economic intervention in support of the killings, the harsh and destructive siege over many years, the daily humiliation to which Palestinians are subjected, the expanding settlements designed to break the occupied territories into Bantustan-like cantons and take control of the resources, the gross violation of the

Geneva Conventions, and other actions that are recognized as crimes throughout most of the world, apart from the US, which has prime responsibility for them. And like others, he contrasts Washington's dedicated support for these crimes with the decade-long US-British assault against the civilian population of Iraq, which has devastated the society and caused hundreds of thousands of deaths while strengthening Saddam Hussein — who was a favored friend and ally of the US and Britain right through his worst atrocities, including the gassing of the Kurds, as people of the region also remember well, even if Westerners prefer to forget the facts. These sentiments are very widely shared. The *Wall Street Journal* (Sept. 14) published a survey of opinions of wealthy and privileged Muslims in the Gulf region (bankers, professionals, businessmen with close links to the U.S.). They expressed much the same views: resentment of the U.S. policies of supporting Israeli crimes and blocking the international consensus on a diplomatic settlement for many years while devastating Iraqi civilian society, supporting harsh and repressive anti-democratic regimes throughout the region, and imposing barriers against economic development by “propping up oppressive regimes.” Among the great majority of people suffering deep poverty and oppression, similar sentiments are far more bitter, and are the source of the fury and despair that has led to suicide bombings, as commonly understood by those who are interested in the facts.

The U.S., and much of the West, prefers a more comforting story. To quote the lead analysis in the *New York Times* (Sept. 16), the perpetrators acted out of “hatred for the values cherished in the West as freedom, tolerance, prosperity, religious pluralism and universal suffrage.” U.S. actions are irrelevant, and therefore need not even be mentioned (Serge Schmemmann). This is a convenient picture, and the general stance is not unfamiliar in intellectual history; in fact, it is close to the norm. It happens to be completely at variance with everything we know, but has all the merits of self-adulation and uncritical support for power.

It is also widely recognized that Bin Laden and others like him are praying for “a great assault on Muslim states,” which will cause “fanatics to flock to his cause” (Jenkins, and many others.). That too is familiar. The escalating cycle of violence is typically welcomed by the harshest and most brutal elements on both sides, a fact evident enough from the recent history of the Balkans, to cite only one of many cases.

Q: What consequences will they have on US inner policy and to the American self reception?

Chomsky: US policy has already been officially announced. The world is being offered a “stark choice”: join us, or “face the certain prospect of death and destruction.” Congress has authorized the use of force against any individuals or countries the President determines to be involved in the attacks, a doctrine that every supporter regards as ultra-criminal. That is easily demonstrated. Simply ask how the same people would have reacted if Nicaragua had adopted this doctrine after the U.S. had rejected the orders of the World Court to terminate its “unlawful use of force” against Nicaragua and had vetoed a Security Council resolution calling on all states to observe international law. And that terrorist attack was far more severe and destructive even than this atrocity.

As for how these matters are perceived here, that is far more complex. One should bear

in mind that the media and the intellectual elites generally have their particular agendas. Furthermore, the answer to this question is, in significant measure, a matter of decision: as in many other cases, with sufficient dedication and energy, efforts to stimulate fanaticism, blind hatred, and submission to authority can be reversed. We all know that very well.

Q: Do you expect U.S. to profoundly change their policy to the rest of the world?

Chomsky: The initial response was to call for intensifying the policies that led to the fury and resentment that provides the background of support for the terrorist attack, and to pursue more intensively the agenda of the most hard line elements of the leadership: increased militarization, domestic regimentation, attack on social programs. That is all to be expected. Again, terror attacks, and the escalating cycle of violence they often engender, tend to reinforce the authority and prestige of the most harsh and repressive elements of a society. But there is nothing inevitable about submission to this course.

Q: After the first shock, came fear of what the U.S. answer is going to be. Are you afraid, too?

Chomsky: Every sane person should be afraid of the likely reaction — the one that has already been announced, the one that probably answers Bin Laden's prayers. It is highly likely to escalate the cycle of violence, in the familiar way, but in this case on a far greater scale.

The U.S. has already demanded that Pakistan terminate the food and other supplies that are keeping at least some of the starving and suffering people of Afghanistan alive. If that demand is implemented, unknown numbers of people who have not the remotest connection to terrorism will die, possibly millions. Let me repeat: the U.S. has demanded that Pakistan kill possibly millions of people who are themselves victims of the Taliban. This has nothing to do even with revenge. It is at a far lower moral level even than that. The significance is heightened by the fact that this is mentioned in passing, with no comment, and probably will hardly be noticed. We can learn a great deal about the moral level of the reigning intellectual culture of the West by observing the reaction to this demand. I think we can be reasonably confident that if the American population had the slightest idea of what is being done in their name, they would be utterly appalled. It would be instructive to seek historical precedents.

If Pakistan does not agree to this and other U.S. demands, it may come under direct attack as well — with unknown consequences. If Pakistan does submit to U.S. demands, it is not impossible that the government will be overthrown by forces much like the Taliban — who in this case will have nuclear weapons. That could have an effect throughout the region, including the oil producing states. At this point we are considering the possibility of a war that may destroy much of human society.

Even without pursuing such possibilities, the likelihood is that an attack on Afghans will have pretty much the effect that most analysts expect: it will enlist great numbers of others to support of Bin Laden, as he hopes. Even if he is killed, it will make little difference. His voice will be heard on cassettes that are distributed throughout the Islamic world, and he is likely to be revered as a martyr, inspiring others. It is

worth bearing in mind that one suicide bombing — a truck driven into a U.S. military base — drove the world's major military force out of Lebanon 20 years ago. The opportunities for such attacks are endless. And suicide attacks are very hard to prevent.

Q: "The world will never be the same after 11.09.01". Do you think so?

Chomsky: The horrendous terrorist attacks on Tuesday are something quite new in world affairs, not in their scale and character, but in the target. For the US, this is the first time since the War of 1812 that its national territory has been under attack, even threat. Its colonies have been attacked, but not the national territory itself. During these years the US virtually exterminated the indigenous population, conquered half of Mexico, intervened violently in the surrounding region, conquered Hawaii and the Philippines (killing hundreds of thousands of Filipinos), and in the past half century particularly, extended its resort to force throughout much of the world. The number of victims is colossal. For the first time, the guns have been directed the other way. The same is true, even more dramatically, of Europe. Europe has suffered murderous destruction, but from internal wars, meanwhile conquering much of the world with extreme brutality. It has not been under attack by its victims outside, with rare exceptions (the IRA in England, for example). It is therefore natural that NATO should rally to the support of the US; hundreds of years of imperial violence have an enormous impact on the intellectual and moral culture.

It is correct to say that this is a novel event in world history, not because of the scale of the atrocity — regrettably — but because of the target. How the West chooses to react is a matter of supreme importance. If the rich and powerful choose to keep to their traditions of hundreds of years and resort to extreme violence, they will contribute to the escalation of a cycle of violence, in a familiar dynamic, with long-term consequences that could be awesome. Of course, that is by no means inevitable. An aroused public within the more free and democratic societies can direct policies towards a much more humane and honorable course.

3- Bush is walking into a trap, Robert Fisk, The Independent, 16 Sept 01

Retaliation is a trap. In a world that was supposed to have learnt that the rule of law comes above revenge, President Bush appears to be heading for the very disaster that Osama bin Laden has laid down for him. Let us have no doubts about what happened in New York and Washington last week. It was a crime against humanity. We cannot understand America's need to retaliate unless we accept this bleak, awesome fact. But this crime was perpetrated - it becomes ever clearer - to provoke the United States into just the blind, arrogant punch that the US military is preparing.

Mr bin Laden - every day his culpability becomes more apparent - has described to me how he wishes to overthrow the pro-American regime of the Middle East, starting with Saudi Arabia and moving on to Egypt, Jordan and the other Gulf states. In an Arab world sunk in corruption and dictatorships - most of them supported by the West - the only act that might bring Muslims to strike at their own leaders would be a brutal, indiscriminate assault by the United States. Mr bin Laden is unsophisticated in foreign affairs, but a close student of the art and horror of war. He knew how to fight the Russians who stayed on in Afghanistan, a Russian monster that revenged itself upon its ill-educated, courageous antagonists until, faced with war without end, the entire Soviet Union began to fall apart.

The Chechens learnt this lesson. And the man responsible for so much of the bloodbath in Chechnya - the career KGB man whose army is raping and murdering the insurgent Sunni Muslim population of Chechnya - is now being signed up by Mr Bush for his "war against people". Vladimir Putin must surely have a sense of humour to appreciate the cruel ironies that have now come to pass, though I doubt if he will let Mr Bush know what happens when you start a war of retaliation; your army - like the Russian forces in Chechnya - becomes locked into battle with an enemy that appears ever more ruthless, ever more evil.

But the Americans need look no further than Ariel Sharon's futile war with the Palestinians to understand the folly of retaliation. In Lebanon, it was always the same. A Hizbollah guerrilla would kill an Israeli occupation soldier, and the Israelis would fire back in retaliation at a village in which a civilian would die. The Hizbollah would retaliate with a Katyusha missile attack over the Israeli border, and the Israelis would retaliate again with a bombardment of southern Lebanon. In the end, the Hizbollah - the "centre of world terror" according to Mr Sharon - drove the Israelis out of Lebanon.

In Israel/Palestine, it is the same story. An Israeli soldier shoots a Palestinian stone-thrower. The Palestinians retaliate by killing a settler. The Israelis then retaliate by sending a murder squad to kill a Palestinian gunman. The Palestinians retaliate by sending a suicide bomber into a pizzeria. The Israelis then retaliate by sending F-16s to bomb a Palestinian police station. Retaliation leads to retaliation and more retaliation. War without end.

And while Mr Bush - and perhaps Mr Blair - prepare their forces, they explain so meretriciously that this is a war for "democracy and liberty", that it is about men who are "attacking civilisation". "America was targeted for attack," Mr Bush informed us on Friday, "because we are the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the

world.” But this is not why America was attacked. If this was an Arab-Muslim apocalypse, then it is intimately associated with events in the Middle East and with America’s stewardship of the area. Arabs, it might be added, would rather like some of that democracy and liberty and freedom that Mr Bush has been telling them about. Instead, they get a president who wins 98 per cent in the elections (Washington’s friend, Mr Mubarak) or a Palestinian police force, trained by the CIA, that tortures and sometimes kills its people in prison. The Syrians would also like a little of that democracy. So would the Saudis. But their effete princes are all friends of America - in many cases, educated at US universities.

I will always remember how President Clinton announced that Saddam Hussein - another of our grotesque inventions - must be overthrown so that the people of Iraq could choose their own leaders. But if that happened, it would be the first time in Middle Eastern history that Arabs have been permitted to do so. No, it is “our” democracy and “our” liberty and freedom that Mr Bush and Mr Blair are talking about, our Western sanctuary that is under attack, not the vast place of terror and injustice that the Middle East has become.

Let me illustrate what I mean. Nineteen years ago today, the greatest act of terrorism - using Israel’s own definition of that much misused word - in modern Middle Eastern history began. Does anyone remember the anniversary in the West? How many readers of this article will remember it? I will take a tiny risk and say that no other British newspaper - certainly no American newspaper - will today recall the fact that on 16 September 1982, Israel’s Phalangist militia allies started their three-day orgy of rape and knifing and murder in the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila that cost 1,800 lives. It followed an Israeli invasion of Lebanon - designed to drive the PLO out of the country and given the green light by the then US Secretary of State, Alexander Haig - which cost the lives of 17,500 Lebanese and Palestinians, almost all of them civilians. That’s probably three times the death toll in the World Trade Centre. Yet I do not remember any vigils or memorial services or candle-lighting in America or the West for the innocent dead of Lebanon; I don’t recall any stirring speeches about democracy or liberty. In fact, my memory is that the United States spent most of the bloody months of July and August 1982 calling for “restraint”.

No, Israel is not to blame for what happened last week. The culprits were Arabs, not Israelis. But America’s failure to act with honour in the Middle East, its promiscuous sale of missiles to those who use them against civilians, its blithe disregard for the deaths of tens of thousands of Iraqi children under sanctions of which Washington is the principal supporter - all these are intimately related to the society that produced the Arabs who plunged America into an apocalypse of fire last week.

America’s name is literally stamped on to the missiles fired by Israel into Palestinian buildings in Gaza and the West Bank. Only four weeks ago, I identified one of them as an AGM 114-D air-to-ground rocket made by Boeing and Lockheed-Martin at their factory in - of all places - Florida, the state where some of the suiciders trained to fly.

It was fired from an Apache helicopter (made in America, of course) during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, when hundreds of cluster bombs were dropped in civilian areas of Beirut by the Israelis in contravention of undertakings given to the United States. Most of the bombs had US Naval markings and America then suspended a

shipment of fighter bombers to Israel - for less than two months.

The same type of missile - this time an AGM 114-C made in Georgia - was fired by the Israelis into the back of an ambulance near the Lebanese village of Mansori, killing two women and four children. I collected the pieces of the missile, including its computer coding plate, flew to Georgia and presented them to the manufacturers at the Boeing factory. And what did the developer of the missile say to me when I showed him photographs of the children his missile had killed? "Whatever you do," he told me, "don't quote me as saying anything critical of the policies of Israel."

I'm sure the father of those children, who was driving the ambulance, will have been appalled by last week's events, but I don't suppose, given the fate of his own wife - one of the women killed - that he was in a mood to send condolences to anyone. All these facts, of course, must be forgotten now.

Every effort will be made in the coming days to switch off the "why" question and concentrate on the who, what and how. CNN and most of the world's media have already obeyed this essential new war rule. I've already seen what happens when this rule is broken. When The Independent published my article on the connection between Middle Eastern injustice and the New York holocaust, the BBC's 24-hour news channel produced an American commentator who remarked that "Robert Fisk has won the prize for bad taste". When I raised the same point on an Irish radio talk show, the other guest, a Harvard lawyer, denounced me as a bigot, a liar, a "dangerous man" and - of course - potentially anti-Semitic. The Irish pulled the plug on him.

No wonder we have to refer to the terrorists as "mindless". For if we did not, we would have to explain what went on in those minds. But this attempt to censor the realities of the war that has already begun must not be permitted to continue. Look at the logic. Secretary of State Colin Powell was insisting on Friday that his message to the Taliban is simple: they have to take responsibility for sheltering Mr bin Laden. "You cannot separate your activities from the activities of the perpetrators," he warned. But the Americans absolutely refuse to associate their own response to their predicament with their activities in the Middle East. We are supposed to hold our tongues, even when Ariel Sharon - a man whose name will always be associated with the massacre at Sabra and Shatila - announces that Israel also wishes to join the battle against "world terror".

No wonder the Palestinians are fearful. In the past four days, 23 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank and Gaza, an astonishing figure that would have been front-page news had America not been blitzed. If Israel signs up for the new conflict, then the Palestinians - by fighting the Israelis - will, by extension, become part of the "world terror" against which Mr Bush is supposedly going to war. Not for nothing did Mr Sharon claim that Yasser Arafat had connections with Osama bin Laden.

I repeat: what happened in New York was a crime against humanity. And that means policemen, arrests, justice, a whole new international court at The Hague if necessary. Not cruise missiles and "precision" bombs and Muslim lives lost in revenge for Western lives. But the trap has been sprung. Mr Bush - perhaps we, too - are now walking into it.

4- Taliban finds few Muslim friends , Robert Fisk, The Independent, Sept 18 01

By Robert Fisk in Beirut

They have been lining up in their condemnation. Mullahs, sheikhs and sayeds, from Beirut to Tehran, are criticising last week's assault on the United States, sending condolences and sympathy and - by their actions - distancing themselves from the atrocity that millions of Arab Muslims watched live on television.

There is genuine outrage, true, but it would be as well to place it in context. Because the Taliban, the shield of Osama bin Laden, has almost as many enemies in the Middle East as it has in America.

For two consecutive days, Sayed Mohamed Hussein Fadlallah, the spiritual guide to the Hizbollah guerrilla movement - the group that reinvented the art of suicide bombing against the Israeli occupation army in Lebanon and which Washington still blames for the kidnapping of Americans in Beirut in the 1980s - has been excoriating those responsible.

"No religion justifies such an action," the Shia Muslim cleric announced in Beirut. "It is not permissible to use innocent and peaceful civilians as a card to change a specific policy." Muslims and Islamists opposed American policy in the region - "which is totally biased in favour of the Zionist enemy" - but they wanted to be friends with the American people, the cleric said.

Sheikh Abdul-Amir Qabalan, the vice-president of the Higher Shia Muslim Council in Lebanon, insisted Islam was "a religion of justice and equality and it condemns any attack on civilians and the innocent".

Now this makes interesting reading. No such condemnations followed the Palestinian suicide bombings that killed 15 civilians, including six children, in a Jerusalem pizzeria in August or the suicide bombing that slaughtered 21 Israeli teenagers in Tel Aviv. Hizbollah's satellite groups were held responsible for the 1983 bombing of the US embassy in Beirut in which more than 50 Lebanese civilians were killed.

In Iran, whose boy soldiers perfected suicide attacks on the Iraqi army in the 1980-88 war and whose government has always supported Palestinian suicide bombers, President Mohammad Khatami and his conservative opponents condemned totally the New York and Washington bombings. This is not surprising.

For in Tehran the rulers of Afghanistan have been called the "black Taliban" for years, long before the US identified them as Mr bin Laden's protectors. The Iranians, and, by extension, their Hizbollah protgs, have long regarded the Taliban's "Wahabi" Sunni Muslim leaders as obscurantists and potential "terrorists".

At least two million Afghan refugees are living in great poverty in eastern Iran, many of whom would have stayed at home were it not for the Taliban's rule and the mass starvation that the Taliban has done little to alleviate. Iran has now closed its border

with Afghanistan to prevent a further exodus of refugees and America has said that it would “consider” inviting Iran to join a coalition against “world terrorism”. Iran will most certainly decline.

The Saudis, of course, can scarcely do anything but join in the chorus of condemnation. They helped to create the Taliban, to legitimise its presence in Afghanistan and to fund and arm the so-called students who destroyed most of the rival mujahedin groups who had been pillaging Kabul and other great Afghan cities in the years that followed the Soviet military withdrawal. Mr bin Laden is himself a Saudi - though one officially deprived of his citizenship - and, as is becoming clearer, some of the hijackers were Saudi citizens.

In Egypt, Sunni Muslim clerics added their own condemnation, although President Mubarak has been one of the few Middle Eastern leaders to warn of the consequences of indiscriminate American retaliation. He it was who warned just two short weeks ago that, unless a peace was restored, he feared there would be “an explosion outside the region”.

Back in Lebanon, the Hizbollah itself issued a crafty statement yesterday, regretting the loss of innocent lives in America but warning Washington not to take advantage of the atrocities “to practise all sorts of aggression and terrorism under the pretext of fighting aggression and terrorism”.

5- What's not being reported re Palestinian response to the tragedy, Al-Awda

Date: 9/15/2001 2:31 PM

RE: Fwd: [Al-Awda-SF] IMPORTANT FACTS (Please Read and Forward Including to Politicians and the Media)

14 September 2001

After the horrific tragedy, media outlets in the US repeatedly aired a clip of a few Palestinians rejoicing. However, there was hardly any discussion or even reporting in the news of the following items.

The terrorist act was strongly condemned by every single Palestinian organization including Fatah, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Hamas, Workers Unions and Committees, Human Right Organizations (Al Haq, Law, Palestine Center for Human Rights), student associations, municipalities, mosques and churches, etc.

The attack was also condemned by every single Arab American, Muslim American, and countless other human rights organizations who support and/or work for Palestinian human rights

Palestinian Americans living in Palestine issued a statement in which they reported that all messages they received from other Palestinians were of sorrow and concern.

Palestinian lawmaker Hanan Ashrawi told a news conference the celebrations were "misguided" and "aberrations" motivated by a feeling among Palestinians that they have been victims of U.S. backing for Israel. Palestinian analyst Ghassan al-Khatib said the "human tragedy" in the United States should not be exploited for political gains by making Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims look like the "bad guys." The vast majority of Palestinians condemned and were horrified and shocked by the terrorist attacks and identified with the victims (as victims themselves).

We won't know the exact numbers for sometime but there are likely dozens if not hundreds of Muslim and Arab Americans killed in these despicable terrorist attacks. Many are still missing and we pray that they will be found safe.

The US Consul General in Jerusalem reported that he has received a huge stack of faxes from Palestinians and Palestinian organizations expressing condolences, grief and solidarity. He himself was pained to see that the media chose to focus on the sensational images of a few Palestinians rejoicing.

The Palestine Legislative Council condemned the terrorist attack on the United States and sent an urgent letter of condolences to Mr. J Dennis Hasterd, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Palestinians in Occupied East Jerusalem held a candle-light vigils on 12 and 14

September to express their grief and solidarity with the American families struck by this tragedy. Mr. Abdel Qader Al-Husseini, son of the late Palestinian leader Faisal Al-Husseini led one of the vigils.

Jerusalem University students, along with the President of the University and the Deans of the various Faculties, began a blood donation drive in Occupied East Jerusalem. Students and professors went to hospitals in the Occupied City, in order to donate blood for the American victims who need it.

The 1 million Palestinian students in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Occupied East Jerusalem, stood five minutes in silence to express their solidarity with the hundreds of American children who have been struck by this strategy, which resembles in its shocking effects their daily sufferings.

Throughout the US, Arab and Muslim Americans joined other American in solidarity vigils and prayers even when some of those members were attacked and/or frightened by rhetoric being espoused in the media

Meanwhile: Georgia Senator Zell Miller's stated "I say bomb the hell out of them. If there's collateral damage, so be it. They certainly found our civilians to be expendable." [NY Times 9/13/01].

"Asked tonight what the attack meant for relations between the United States and Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, the former prime minister, replied: 'It's very good.' Then he edited himself: 'Well, not very good, but it will generate immediate sympathy.' New York Times, 12 September 2001, p. A22: <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/12/international/12ISRA.html>

While the media's attention was diverted by the tragedy, Israeli forces stormed the Palestinian cities of Jenin and later Jericho killing scores of people, injuring over 120, and demolishing many homes and other buildings.

For other information, see: <http://electronicIntifada.net/coveragetrends/rejoicing.html>

Al-Awda, The Palestine Right to Return Coalition, is the largest network of grassroots activists dedicated to Palestinian human rights. For more information contact:

Al-Awda, Palestine Right to Return Coalition P.O. Box 1172 Orange, CT 06477 Fax: (717) 832-1123 E-mail: prrc@mail.com WWW: <http://al-awda.org><http://al-awda.org>
Press Room: <http://al-awda.org/pressroom.htm><http://al-awda.org/pressroom.htm>

To subscribe or unsubscribe from the list please send a message to cepal@cyberus.ca.

CEPAL Canadian-Palestinian Educational Exchange 323 Chapel Street, Ottawa Ontario K1N 7Z2 Tel: (613) 236-7825 Fax: (613)237-5669 Web: www.cepal.ca Email: info@cepal.ca

CEPAL works to assist Palestinian refugees in the pursuit of their basic human rights

by increasing their access to education and by raising public awareness in Canada about their struggle.

6-Afghanistan

----- Original Message -----

From: Donald L. Nathanson, MD

Sent: Monday, September 24, 2001 6:49 AM

To: tomkins-talk@tomkins.org

Subject: Afghanistan

One of my college classmates contributed this short essay derived from his 25 year experience as a State Department officer, much of this spent in Afghanistan. I thought many might find this interesting.

Don Nathanson

\ Donald L. Nathanson, M.D. 610-896-6885 (fax)
\ Executive Director 610-896-6887 (voice)
\ The Silvan S. Tomkins Institute 215-546-7626 (office)
\ Clinical Professor of Psychiatry e-mail:
\ Jefferson Medical College <mailto:nathanson@tomkins.org>
nathanson@tomkins.org
\ Columnist, Behavior OnLine <<http://www.behavior.net/>>
www.behavior.net

Dear Pete,

Thanks for the kind comment. Yes, sure, pass the piece on as you wish. I was with the State Department from 1962-87, and two of our four children were born in Kabul. Afghanistan was very peaceful when we were there and we travelled all over the country without trouble. It was, and still is, very tribal and real power is much more decentralized than it is in our country -- The tribes are different in terms of languages, culture and geography and the government in Kabul has less regional control than Americans might imagine. Whatever, trying to push them around just does not work. People who live in the mountains have quite a different outlook on the world than those who live in the flat and grow things.

Regards,

Clark

First, I must tell you that the network coverage of Afghanistan gives me liver trouble, if not gas. Andrea Mitchell of NBC calls the Afghans "Afghanis". The afghani is a unit of currency, the people are Afghans. ABC and NPR make the same mistake regularly. NPR had an "expert" on who thought the Afghan wars, all three of them, were in the "late 19th century". Actually, 1841-42, the 1870s and 1919 will do it. When the experts don't even know the basic facts or what the people of the country are called one wants to kick one's cat. Very hard.

Afghanistan really is very different from the United States. Here we all speak the same language, we all know who Tom Brokaw is and people from the cities and those living on farms share maybe 90% of the same culture. Afghan villages are deeply traditional and do not benefit from the leveling process of TV. When we were there the country was ruled by a thin crust of educated Afghans, a reasonable percentage of whom had studied abroad. When the Soviets invaded in 1979, virtually all of those people left the country. Those who did not went during the ensuing civil war. Kabul University, the only one in the country, was closed in 1979 as were many of the secular secondary schools. In the countryside, such education as took place was more likely than not provided by religious schools, reversing the previous trend toward secular education. Many of the government leaders today were fighting at the ages US kids go to school. Those running the country have little experience with the outside world. They are not anti-US, in fact they rather admire us for our assistance to them during the Soviet period and for our refusal to get in the factional matters which, predictably, evolved into one or more civil wars, depending on how you count them. You might say that the Taliban are a moderately enlightened 16th century regime. We hear how poorly the Taliban treats women and it is true there are restrictions which we 21st century Americans find reprehensible.

Still, an important factor in 16th century Islam (found to a degree in Saudi Arabia and some of the Gulf states today) is that women need to be protected. The Afghans (not the Afghanis) have been allowing a modest degree of schooling for women, some now have jobs and they can now go out on the streets. The Taliban government is starting to slither into the 17th century.

Obviously I do not agree with the characterization of the Taliban as Nazis as some commentators describe them. It is little noted that when they came to power lawlessness and the widespread physical depredations against women stopped dead. Also, Afghanistan has been the world's largest producer of opium, outpacing the previous champ, Burma. Half of the heroin sold in Europe is from Afghanistan as well as 20% of that here. Last year, after representations from the UN and the US, the Taliban went to the producing areas and told the farmers that opium was being used to despoil women (in the West) and that God wanted them to stop growing it. The farmers wanted a support program to keep up their income and the Taliban replied they could not afford it, but the farmers had to stop growing it anyway. Their fate was Allah's will but He wanted them to do it anyway. Both the UN and the State Department sent teams to the poppy areas (know from satellite photography) and, surprisingly, confirmed poppy production had dropped to zero. By comparison we are spending a billion dollars a year in Columbia and not getting much of anywhere. Anyway, the Taliban government may have a horrid press, but in my view they are definitely not evil incarnate.

You have heard about the foreign aid workers who have been arrested for spreading Christianity. For perspective, one of my Afghan friends was sentenced to death in the 1970s for renting his property to a Christian church. He now lives here and we have lunch once a month, but the Afghan sensitivity to proselytizing is not new with the Taliban.

Over the past 160 years there have been numerous attempts to threaten the

Afghans. It just never seems to work but, bless our optimistic American spirits, we are trying it again.. The British fought three Afghan wars and won none of them. In the first, the British lost all but 236 men out of a force of 17,000 British and Indian troops plus camp followers. The Soviets, of course, killed lots of people but left, how to say, unsatisfied. Afghan relations with Iran in the 1960-70 period are further evidence, not that any is needed, that they do not like to be pushed around.

The Middle East has a long tradition of hospitality. You may not kill an enemy at a watering hole. It's just too easy. By extension you should offer hospitality even to your enemies if they ask for it. Once you have given them food or drink, you must let them rest and give them a good chance to get away before you resume trying to kill them. Bin Laden did a lot for the Afghans when they were fighting against the Soviets. Their culture demands they give him hospitality. They have been doing this, of course. Still, the Taliban is not pleased with mass murder and they have clearly denounced the WTC bombings. I think they are heartily sick of having bin Laden around. If we provide them evidence of his involvement, they say they will turn him over to a court composed of three Islamic judges. As it is they have asked him to leave the country. We seem to think all the Afghans have to do is say the word and he will be "turned over". As a practical matter, bin Laden has some 3000 non-Afghan troops with him. I can think of no reason the Afghans would want to expend lives going up against this force on our behalf when all that will happen would be that bin Laden would be executed in a US court. We negotiated for 10 years with the Libyans before we got those two out to be tried in the Netherlands. Bush's apparent refusal to talk if the Afghans do not immediately agree to turn bin Laden over to us strikes me as misguided, at best. US special forces tramping around Afghanistan looking for the 3000 man guard force to engage does not seem like an attractive alternative. Expecting the Afghans to "turn him over" to us, as our president asks, seems a bad joke. Why would the Afghans be willing to suffer 1000 or more casualties just to turn someone over to the United States just so we can execute him? Never happen: even if Afghanistan was the 51st US state and Rudy Guliani was governor.

It has been widely reported that the Afghans are unwilling to be really helpful until we turn over evidence of bin Laden's guilt to them. How unreasonable is this? Would Texas turn some miscreant over to Afghanistan just because they wanted him and without judicial proof of probable guilt?

Personally, I do not think we are in for a series of WTC style incidents. From the news it is obvious that we had partial information on a great many operatives in the US, Belgium, Indonesia, France and the UK among others (sixty countries according to the press), but we took the Department of Justice approach and tried to build up cases to prosecute. Logical enough, but in retrospect it would probably have been better to deport, disrupt money flows and add a magnitude of difficulty to their efforts. Also, a key issue is perceived US support of Israel against the Arabs. The fact that Arafat just announced on the radio, in Arabic, that his security forces should not fire against the Israelis -- even in self defense -- and that the Israelis made some major withdrawals at the same time, indicates both side may realize our patience with their interminable haggling may be wearing thin. Who know, this problem could get better.

In his speech, the President indicated we were going to punish Afghanistan for

harboring bin Laden. If we are going to blow up their bridges, somebody else got there first. If we want to destroy their schools, it's already been done. Kill a million people? Been there, done that. Send two and a half million people to refuges in neighboring countries? Too late. We should not forget that 300,000 people are on relief in Kabul (the US is the biggest donor). A non-minor reason for this is that the irrigations system has been largely destroyed and much of the agricultural area is home to what is bay far the world's largest collection of active land mines. Is our righteous objective to increase the total to 500,000?

Afghanistan it is not a place you should want to fight. While entering the country has never been difficult militarily, getting out is the trick. The problem is the myriad of ambush sites and the determination of the Afghans not to be dominated. While we might enter Afghanistan with what we think are the purest of motives (to capture a murderer and avenge an act of war, reasons with which virtually the entire US public agrees), the Afghans will see it entirely differently; as an act of war against them. It is mildly possible that if we are willing to play a few cards the Taliban will give us some location information and turn a semi-blind eye to sort-term operations. Talk with them, says I. As the old cliché goes, revenge is a dish best served cold. Maybe on a rainy December night six years from now.

Cheers,

Clark

7-Statement of former Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu before the US Government Reform Committee September 20, 2001

Statement of
former Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu
before the
Government Reform Committee
September 20, 2001

Chairman Burton,
Distinguished Representatives,

I want to thank you for inviting me to appear before you today. I feel a profound responsibility addressing you in this hour of peril in the capital of liberty.

What is at stake today is nothing less than the survival of our civilization. There may be some who would have thought a week ago that to talk in these apocalyptic terms about the battle against international terrorism was to engage in reckless exaggeration. No longer.

Each one of us today understands that we are all targets, that our cities are vulnerable, and that our values are hated with an unmatched fanaticism that seeks to destroy our societies and our way of life.

I am certain that I speak on behalf of my entire nation when I say – Today, we are all Americans - in grief, as in defiance.

In grief, because my people have faced the agonizing horrors of terror for many decades, and we feel an instant kinship with both the victims of this tragedy and the great nation that mourns its fallen brothers and sisters.

In defiance, because just as my country continues to fight terrorism in our battle for survival, I know that America will not cower before this challenge.

I have absolute confidence that if we, the citizens of the free world, led by President Bush, marshal the enormous reserves of power at our disposal, harness the steely resolve of a free people, and mobilize our collective will - we shall eradicate this evil from the face of the earth.

But to achieve this goal, we must first however answer several questions: Who is responsible for this terrorist onslaught? Why? What is the motive behind these attacks? And most importantly, what must be done to defeat these evil forces?

The first and most crucial thing to understand is this: There is no international terrorism without the support of sovereign states. International terrorism simply cannot be sustained for long without the regimes that aid and abet it.

Terrorists are not suspended in mid-air. They train, arm and indoctrinate their killers from within safe havens on territory provided by terrorist states. Often these regimes provide the terrorists with intelligence, money and operational assistance, dispatching them to serve as deadly proxies to wage a hidden war against more powerful enemies.

These regimes mount a worldwide propaganda campaign to legitimize terror, besmirching its victims and exculpating its practitioners --- as we witnessed in the farcical spectacle in Durban last month.

Iran, Libya, and Syria call the US and Israel racist countries that abuse human rights?

Even Orwell could not have imagined such a world.

Take away all this state support, and the entire scaffolding of international terrorism will collapse into the dust.

The international terrorist network is thus based on regimes – Iran, Iraq, Syria, Taleban Afghanistan, Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority and several other Arab regimes such as the Sudan.

These regimes are the ones that harbor the terrorist groups: Osama Bin Laden in Afghanistan, Hizballah and others in Syrian-controlled Lebanon, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the recently mobilized Fatah and Tanzim factions in the Palestinian territories, and sundry other terror organizations based in such capitals as Damascus, Baghdad and Khartoum.

These terrorist states and terror organizations together form a terror network, whose constituent parts support each other operationally as well as politically.

For example, the Palestinian groups cooperate closely with Hezbollah, which in turn links them to Syria, Iran and Bin Laden.

These offshoots of terror have affiliates in other states that have not yet uprooted their presence, such as Egypt, Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Now, how did this come about? The growth of this terror network is the result of several developments in the last two decades: Chief among them is the Khomeini Revolution and the establishment of a clerical Islamic state in Iran.

This created a sovereign spiritual base for fomenting a strident Islamic militancy worldwide – a militancy that was often backed by terror.

Equally important was the victory in the Afghan war of the international mujahedin brotherhood.

This international band of zealots, whose ranks include Osama Bin Laden, saw their

victory over the Soviet Union as providential proof of the innate supremacy of faithful Moslems over the weak infidel powers.

They believed that even the superior weapons of a superpower could not withstand their superior will.

To this should also be added Saddam Hussein's escape from destruction at the end of the Gulf War, his dismissal of UN monitors, and his growing confidence that he can soon develop unconventional weapons to match those of the West.

Finally, the creation of Yasser Arafat's terror enclave gave a safe haven to militant Islamic terrorist groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Like their mujaheedin cousins, they drew inspiration from Israel's hasty withdrawal from Lebanon, glorified as a great Moslem victory by the Syrian-backed Hizballah.

Under Arafat's rule, these Palestinian Islamic terrorist groups made repeated use of the technique of suicide bombing, going so far as to run summer camps in Gaza that teach Palestinian children how to become suicide martyrs.

Here is what Arafat's government controlled newspaper, Al Hayat Al Jadida, said on September 11, the very day of the suicide bombing of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon:

"The suicide bombers of today are the noble successors of the Lebanese suicide bombers, who taught the U.S. Marines a tough lesson in [Lebanon]... These suicide bombers are the salt of the earth, the engines of history... They are the most honorable people among us... "

A simple rule prevails here: The success of terrorists in one part of the terror network emboldens terrorists throughout the network.

This then is the Who. Now for the Why.

Though its separate parts may have local objectives and take part in local conflicts, the main motivation driving the terror network is an anti-Western hostility that seeks to achieve nothing less than a reversal of history.

It seeks to roll back the West and install an extremist form of Islam as the dominant power in the world.

It seeks to do this not by means of its own advancement and progress, but by destroying the enemy. This hatred is the product of a seething resentment that has simmered for centuries in certain parts of the Arab and Islamic world.

Most Moslems in the world, including the vast majority of the growing Moslem communities in the West, are not guided by this interpretation of history, nor are they moved by its call for a holy war against the West.

But some are. And though their numbers are small compared to the peaceable majority,

they nevertheless constitute a growing hinterland for this militancy.

Militant Islamists resented the West for pushing back the triumphant march of Islam into the heart of Europe many centuries ago.

Its adherents, believing in the innate supremacy of Islam, then suffered a series of shocks when in the last two centuries that same hated, supposedly inferior West penetrated Islamic realms in North Africa, the Middle East and the Persian Gulf.

For them the mission was clear: The West had to be first pushed out of these areas. Pro-western Middle Eastern regimes were toppled in rapid succession, including in Iran.

And Israel, the Middle East's only democracy and its purest manifestation of Western progress and freedom, must be wiped off the face of the earth.

Thus, the soldiers of militant Islam do not hate the West because of Israel, they hate Israel because of the West -- because they see it is an island of Western democratic values in a Moslem-Arab sea of despotism.

That is why they call Israel the Little Satan, to distinguish it clearly from the country that has always been and will always be the Great Satan -- The United States of America.

Nothing better illustrates this than Osama bin Laden's call for Jihad against the United States in 1998. He gave as his primary reason not Israel, not the Palestinians, not the 'peace process', but rather the very presence of the United States 'occupying the Land of Islam in the holiest of places' -- and where is that? -- 'the Arabian peninsula' says Bin Laden, where America is 'plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, and humiliating its people'. Israel, by the way, comes a distant third, after 'the continuing aggression against the Iraqi people'. [Al Quds al Arabi -- February 23, 1998]

For the Bin Ladens of the world Israel is merely a sideshow. America is the target.

But reestablishing a resurgent Islam requires not just rolling back the West; it requires destroying its main engine, the United States. And if the US cannot be destroyed just now, it can be first humiliated -- as in the Teheran hostage crisis two decades ago -- and then ferociously attacked again and again, until it is brought to its knees.

But the ultimate goal remains the same: Destroy America and win eternity.

Some of you may find it hard to believe that Islamic militants truly cling to the mad fantasy of destroying America. Make no mistake about it. They do. And unless they are stopped now, their attacks will continue, and become even more lethal in the future.

To understand the true dangers of Islamic militancy, we can compare it to another ideology which sought world domination -- communism. Both movements pursued irrational goals, but the communists at least pursued theirs in a rational way.

Anytime they had to choose between ideology and their own survival, as in Cuba or

Berlin, they backed off and chose survival.

Not so for the Islamic militants. They pursue an irrational ideology irrationally - with no apparent regard for human life, neither their own lives nor the lives of their enemies. The Communists seldom, if ever, produced suicide bombers, while Islamic militancy produces hordes of them, glorifying them and promising them that their dastardly deeds will earn them a glorious afterlife.

This highly pathological aspect of Islamic militancy is what makes it so deadly for mankind.

When in 1996, I wrote a book about fighting terrorism, I warned about the militant Islamic groups operating in the West with the support of foreign powers-- serving as a new breed of "domestic-international" terrorists, basing themselves in America to wage Jihad against America:

Such groups, I wrote then, nullify in large measure the need to have air power or intercontinental missiles as delivery systems for an Islamic nuclear payload. They will be the delivery system. In the worst of such scenarios, I wrote, the consequences could be not a car bomb but a nuclear bomb in the basement of the World Trade Center.

Well, they did not use a nuclear bomb. They used two 150 ton fully fueled jetliners to wipe out the Twin Towers. But does anyone doubt that given the chance, they will throw atom bombs at America and its allies? And perhaps long before that, chemical and biological weapons?

This is the greatest danger facing our common future. Some states of the terror network already possess chemical and biological capabilities, and some are feverishly developing nuclear weapons. Can one rule out the possibility that they will be tempted to use such weapons, openly or through terror proxies, or that their weapons might fall into the hands of the terrorist groups they harbor?

We have received a wake up call from hell. Now the question is simple: Do we rally to defeat this evil, while there is still time, or do we press a collective snooze button and go back to business as usual?

The time for action is now.

Today the terrorists have the will to destroy us, but they do not have the power. There is no doubt that we have the power to crush them. Now we must also show that we have the will to do just that.

Once any part of the terror network acquires nuclear weapons, this equation will fundamentally change, and with it the course of human affairs.

This is the historical imperative that now confronts all of us.

And now the third point: What do we do about it?

First, as President Bush said, we must make no distinction between the terrorists and

the states that support them. It is not enough to root out the terrorists who committed this horrific act of war. We must dismantle the entire terrorist network.

If any part of it remains intact, it will rebuild itself, and the specter of terrorism will reemerge and strike again.

Bin Laden, for example, has shuttled over the last decade from Saudi Arabia to Afghanistan to the Sudan and back again. So we must not leave any base intact.

To achieve this goal we must first have moral clarity. We must fight terror wherever and whenever it appears. We must make all states play by the same rules. We must declare terrorism a crime against humanity, and we must consider the terrorists enemies of mankind, to be given no quarter and no consideration for their purported grievances.

If we begin to distinguish between acts of terror, justifying some and repudiating others based on sympathy with this or that cause, we will lose the moral clarity that is so essential for victory.

This clarity is what enabled America and Britain to root out piracy in the nineteenth century. This is how the Allies rooted out Nazism in the twentieth century.

They did not look for the “root cause” of piracy or the “root cause” of Nazism – because they knew that some acts are evil in and of themselves, and do not deserve any consideration or “understanding”.

They did not ask if Hitler was right about the alleged wrong done to Germany at Versailles. That they left to the historians. The leaders of the Western Alliance said something else: Nothing justifies Nazism. Nothing!

We must be equally clear cut today: Nothing justifies terrorism, Nothing!

Terrorism is defined not by the identity of its perpetrators nor by the cause they espouse. Rather, it is defined by the nature of the act.

Terrorism is the deliberate attack on innocent civilians. In this it must be distinguished from legitimate acts of war that target combatants and may unintentionally harm civilians.

When the British bombed a Gestapo headquarters in 1944, and one of their bombs unintentionally struck a children’s hospital that was a tragedy, but it was not terrorism.

When Israel fired a missile that killed two Hamas arch-terrorists, and two Palestinians children who were playing nearby were tragically struck down, that is not terrorism.

But terrorists do not unintentionally harm civilians. They deliberately murder, maim, and menace civilians – as many as possible.

No cause, no grievance, no apology can ever justify terrorism. Terrorism against Americans, Israelis, Spaniards, Britons, Russians, or anyone else, is all part of the same evil and must be treated as such.

It is time to establish a fixed principle for the international community: any cause that uses terrorism to advance its aims will not be rewarded. On the contrary, it will be punished and placed beyond the pale.

Armed with this moral clarity in defining terrorism, we must possess an equal moral clarity in fighting it.

If we include Iran, Syria, and the Palestinian Authority in the coalition to fight terror - even though they currently harbor, sponsor and dispatch terrorists --- then the alliance against terror will be defeated from within.

Perhaps we might achieve a short-term objective of destroying one terrorist fiefdom, but it will preclude the possibility of overall victory. Such a coalition will melt down because of its own internal contradictions.

We might win a battle. We will certainly lose the war.

These regimes, like all terrorist states, must be given a forthright demand: Stop terrorism, permanently, or you will face the wrath of the free world – through harsh and sustained political, economic and military sanctions.

Obviously, some of these regimes will scramble in fear and issue platitudes about their opposition to terror, just as Arafat, Iran and Syria did, while they keep their terror apparatus intact. We should not be fooled. These regimes are already on the US lists of states supporting terrorism – and if they're not, they should be.

The price of admission for any state into the coalition against terror must be to first completely dismantle the terrorist infrastructures within their realm.

Iran will have to dismantle a worldwide network of terrorism and incitement based in Teheran.

Syria will have to shut down Hizballah and the dozen terrorist organizations that operate freely in Damascus and in Lebanon.

Arafat will have to crush Hamas and Islamic Jihad, close down their suicide factories and training grounds, rein in his own Fatah and Tanzim terrorists and cease the endless incitement to violence.

To win this war, we must fight on many fronts. The most obvious one is direct military action against the terrorists themselves. Israel's policy of preemptively striking at those who seek to murder its people is, I believe, better understood today and requires no further elaboration.

But there is no substitute for the key action that we must take: Imposing the most punishing diplomatic, economic and military sanction on all terrorist states;

To this must be added these measures:

Freeze financial assets in the West of terrorist regimes and organizations;

Revise legislation, subject to periodic renewal, to enable better surveillance against organizations inciting violence;

Keep convicted terrorist behind bars. Do not negotiate with terrorists;

Train special forces to fight terror.

And Not least important, impose sanctions on suppliers of nuclear technology to terrorist states.

I've had some experience in pursuing all these courses of action in Israel's battle against terrorism, and I will be glad to elaborate on any one of them if you wish, including the sensitive questions surrounding intelligence.

But I have to be clear: Victory over terrorism is not, at its most fundamental level, a matter of law enforcement or intelligence. However important these functions may be, they can only reduce the dangers, not eliminate them.

The immediate objective is to end all state support for, and complicity with, terror. If vigorously and continuously challenged, most of these regimes can be deterred from sponsoring terrorism.

But there is a real possibility that some will not be deterred— and those may be ones that possess weapons of mass destruction.

Again, we cannot dismiss the possibility that a militant terrorist state will use its proxies to threaten or launch a nuclear attack with apparent impunity.

Nor can we completely dismiss the possibility that a militant regime, like its terrorist proxies, will commit collective suicide for the sake of its fanatical ideology.

In this case, we might face not thousands of dead, but hundreds of thousands and possibly millions. This is why the US must do everything in its power to prevent regimes like Iran and Iraq from developing nuclear weapons, and disarm them of their weapons of mass destruction.

This is the great mission that now stands before the free world. That mission must not be watered down to allow certain states to participate in the coalition that is now being organized. Rather, the coalition must be built around this mission.

It may be that some will shy away from adopting such an uncompromising stance against terrorism. If some free states choose to remain on the sidelines, America must be prepared to march forward without them -- for there is no substitute for moral and strategic clarity.

I believe that if the United States stands on principle, all the democracies will eventually join the war on terrorism. The easy route may be tempting, but it will not win the day.

On September eleventh, I, like everyone else, was glued to a television set watching the savagery that struck America. Yet amid the smoking ruins of the Twin Towers one could make out the Statue of Liberty holding high the torch of freedom.

It is freedom's flame that the terrorists sought to extinguish.

But it is that same torch, so proudly held by the United States, that can lead the free world to crush the forces of terror and secure our tomorrow.

It is within our power. Let us now make sure that it is within our will.

Committee on Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515 (202) 225-5074

Many of the documents on this web site are stored in PDF Format. To view them you must have Adobe's Acrobat PDF Reader. If you do not have this software you may download and install it from <<http://www.adobe.com/>>Adobe's website.

If you have any comments, questions, or corrections please send them to the committee's <<mailto:grcwebnaster@mail.house.gov>>web administrator. (note: Email to this address will not be seen by members of Congress. This address is for comments and technical inquiries about this web site only. Therefore, email on other matters will be discarded. For a response from a member of Congress, please <<http://www.house.gov/house/MemberWWW.html>>write your representative.)