

THE AFTERMATH OF SEPTEMBER 11

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By Professor Khurshid Ahmad

September 11, 2001 has become a memorable day and a historic turn in world affairs!

The bloody events of this gloomy morning of September shook not just the United States of America but also the entire world. In just two hours, the skyscraper of the World Trade Center in New York was reduced to rubble, the impregnable walls of the Pentagon fell to ground, and 2,890 precious lives belonging to 28 countries of the world were lost in a very short span of time. A whole world was surprised as to how this all could happen in the political and trade centers of the most powerful country of the world. The world is still in the state of surprise even after the lapse of full one year and despite America's playing havoc all over the world like a wounded tiger, destruction of Afghanistan and killing of thousands of innocents in the name of punishment to the al-Qaeda and the Taliban, and plunging the whole world in the fires of a new confrontation in the name of 'war on terrorism'. The world is as surprised today as it was on Sept. 11, 2001. To be true, its bewilderment has even increased with the passage of time.

This is still a dilemma as to what happened? How and why did it happen? Who was behind it? Who gained what? And where are we going now? These are the questions that continue to puzzle, even after the passage of one complete year, those who want to come to terms with reality by understanding it. This is a serious matter as the issue is about the future of humanity and civilization. The issue is not about just an event, a tragedy, or a disaster, however important it might be; the issue is about the life of entire humanity, America's role in the international chessboard, and the direction and pattern of the new emerging global order that is taking all nations of the world under its folds and in its grip. To ignore the changes that are taking place in politics and patterns of global domination, and the threats that have emerged on the horizon, and to assume the role of a mere spectator can cause human civilization and development, freedom and sovereignty of the nations of the world plunge into a new dark era. The path that America has adopted and the direction to which its president and his team are running is a signal of enormous dangers for America itself, the whole of humanity in general and Muslim world and Pakistan in particular. Though the apparent motto is 'war on terrorism', the way the events of Sept. 11 are being used to erect a new colonial system of American domination has raised serious and basic questions about the happenings on the fateful day as well as the strategy that was adopted in their wake. Pondering over them is imperative for the survival of humanity and for the formulation of rightful strategy and correct steps to meet the challenges we are facing.

On the first anniversary of the events of Sept. 11, 2001, we would try to briefly review the situation and find out the significance of Sept. 11 from the perspective of the global policy America has adopted on the basis of these events. We would try to fix the status of the events of Sept. 11 in the global political chessboard, along with their impact on America, global order, Muslim world and

Pakistan. It is imperative to know where we are heading. What challenges are confronting us? And, above all, what kind of strategy and level of preparation are needed to meet these challenges?

Why No Investigation?

The first question that puzzle us, as it puzzles all sane people, is: why efforts were not made to know the real facts behind such a big eventuality, to make the situation clear through transparent and unflinching judicial investigation, to identify the causes and motives, and to formulate such a 'consensus strategy' at the national and international levels that could meet the demands of justice and give solace to all peoples, the course of action could have been decided with agreement rather than under coercion, and humanity could have charted out some strategy to avoid such dangers and accidents in the future. The oversimplification, the haste, the arrogance, and the superficiality the American leadership resorted in order to escape the real questions along with the way it used these events for its own colonial ends and interests – all have give rise to serious doubts and reservations not only about the leadership capability, but also about its intentions and designs.

All the blame is put on the door of one person - Osama bin Laden - or, at the most, on a few hundreds or thousands of his associates (al-Qaeda). The whole of the world is being thrown at the throes of terror; though using force blatantly presents no solution to such problems.

No serious and satisfactory effort has been made to date to probe into the matter, to present all the facts with impartiality, to analyze all aspects and to fix the problem: What happened? How? Why? And who perpetrated it? Who are responsible, and to which extent? What are the factors and causes behind these events and what is required to grasp the situation and to reform it; to avert such accidents and to plan for the future? Anger and revenge can never substitute cool analysis and judicious strategy. Investigation commissions are formed to probe into what are otherwise petty issues; causes are unearthed and strategies for reforming the situation are decided. It is strange that no such effort is made in the case of such a big happening, and mere contention, rather than proof, is made the basis for policy. The intelligence failure is only grudgingly admitted, but neither the responsibility is fixed nor any punitive steps are taken. No one was held to account for the failure of the whole security system in America, which consists of 13 principal agencies and costs \$67 billion annually. One of these agencies, whose function is to provide security to national institutions, has an annual budget of \$6.7 billion and 30,000 employees. Another is the CIA, with a massive annual budget of \$30 billion, whose very purpose is to smell external threats to the land. None of these are held accountable for the sheer collapse of the intelligence system.

It is now known that many American institutions had contacts with the Taliban at the highest levels during this entire period. A whole stockpile of information about Osama bin Laden and his

associates was also available that different sources had provided not only to the CIA but to the White House also. There was such information on tables till September 10 that could have led to clues, had Osama and his associates been involved. So, the question is: when the most important American institutions failed to perform their duty why they were not proceeded against? What was done to fix the responsibility? Is it because Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda are being used as 'smoke screen' and shirking the investigations and accountability is a kind of 'cover-up'? The administration even disliked congressional hearing on the subject, and tried to stop it. When it could not stop it and proceeding about the information of intelligence agencies got started, it first resisted the demand for information; when it had to, it gave only incomplete information. It even bugged the proceedings of the Senate Committee, an act for which the Committee gave a warning for defamation proceedings. No chief of any intelligence agency was held accountable; rather the intelligence budget was raised by \$20 billion. Even a new security agency is being established that plans to introduce a surveillance system resembling that of the Soviet Russia. And, this all is happening in the backdrop of the situation where criticism of the government's performance is being held as against patriotism.

"It is perhaps surprising that few if any are critiquing the Afghan campaign. Criticism is deemed to be almost unpatriotic." **(Newsweek, August 10, 2002, p.12)**

An emotional atmosphere has been created with the help of propaganda while efforts at impartial investigations and search for the truth are being crushed with force. Those who have conducted impartial and independent investigations express doubts even today about the capability of Osama and his associates to carry out such operations.

Two recently published books from France have raised some very basic questions. The facts presented in these books have caused clamor in academic and political circles. But, the American media as well as the government are overlooking all these aspects. The French author Thierry Meyssan's two books have especially caused quite a stir. One of these is *L'Effroyable Imposture* (The Horrible Lie). This book refutes that an airliner attacked the Pentagon and, through an analysis of the damage done to the building, proves that an airliner's crash could not cause such damage and that it could be the result of a missile strike. This shows the involvement of some group or agency, rather than that of al-Qaeda. The second book of this author *Pentagate*, which has come only the last month, shows that America diverted attention from the facts and causes of terrorism of Sept. 11 and used it for its own economic and strategic interests; the real evidence was not brought forth or was destroyed.

Another book *Forbidden truth* by two other French writers Jean-Charles Brisoro and Guillaum Dasquire became the best seller soon after being published first from France and then from America. It not only uncovers the secret forces behind the events of Sept. 11, rather the whole issue has been presented with its political background that how the people at the helm of politics and economy in America are orchestrating a heinous game-plan and targeting others to cover their

own nefarious designs. The book shows how the tricks of the American game planners turned on themselves. Moreover, access to the resources of Central Asia and control over the region through Afghanistan after the disintegration of the Soviet Union has been the real objective and target. The attempt is to attain this objective on the corpses of innocent people of America and Afghanistan.

Joseph Trent, author of *The Secret History of CIA*, has written the introduction of the English edition of the book. He has openly said that the American leadership cannot tolerate a serious investigation into the whole issue because it does not come out clean itself and that name of many a self-righteous people come in the way.

"The FBI and CIA tried to blame each other. The day after the 9-11 attacks Vice President Cheney called the Senate majority leader Tom Daschle trying to talk him out of any major probe into the intelligence failure. There could be no serious investigation because a serious investigation in the end would reveal that money and oil were more important than protecting Saudi Arabia or the United State. A serious investigation would demonstrate that Middle East and money still helps support members of the Bush family." **(Forbidden Truth, p. xii)**

The contents of the above-mentioned books are not our subject. We also cannot say to what extent they uncover the facts and where figment of imagination has crept in. Our interest lies in finding out why the American leadership did not take the path of investigation and accountability. The attention is neither on the real facts, nor on the causes and motives behind the events. Targeting 'escape goats' of its own choosing, the American leadership has adopted a dangerous course of trampling upon the very American constitution, the UN Charter, the international law, the rule of law, sovereignty of nations and countries and all those values that are the fruit of struggle of not just a few years but of centuries; and plans for a new global colonialism are made with the establishment of American political and economic hegemony on the nations of the world. The search for convenient targets is a continuous process: the first was Osama, then came al-Qaeda, then Taliban and Afghanistan, then al-Qaeda's supporters in 30 countries, then Iraq, Iran, Sudan, North Korea, and then, by now, Saudi Arabia, Islamic and welfare organizations all over the world, religious education institutions. To haunt and chase them, new principles were devised to acquire powers to hit the first apparent target, to plan military intervention, and, to change the governments.

These are the questions that confound and baffle every sane person. 60 American intellectuals, including many Nobel laureates, have expressed their anxiety that *The Guardian* newspaper of London has published in June 2002. They have condemned big nations' military intervention in other countries on the basis of 'perceived threats', expressed concern over the violation of human rights and dismay over arrests without trials and depriving the accused from the right of defense. They have declared 'unjust, immoral and illegitimate' the war that Bush has imposed on the world. They have invited the people of the world to struggle against it, and have given indication of their

own participation in this struggle. They have also taken notice of presenting the whole matter after Sept. 11 as war between good and evil, and of media's becoming a tool to trumpet the administration's viewpoint. To ask "why did these dastardly events happen?" was held synonymous of treason; so it warrants no discussion. No objections were raised on the political and moral basis of what America did and are doing, while the virtual answer to every question has been "war outside the country and repressive measure within the country".

Recently, 80 German intellectuals issued a declaration in the wake of incessant American warnings and pressure on the European nations. It openly says that what the American leadership terms "war on terror" is but "open aggression and unpardonable crime, politically and morally." The German intellectuals refused to buy the American stand on what it is doing in Afghanistan and other countries of the world in the name of "war on terror". They say that it cannot be termed a just war. Opposing 'monopolization of universal values', they said America cannot interpret human values the way it likes. They said:

"There are no universally valid values which allow the justification of the mass murder (Sept. 11 terror attack) in our place with another mass killing (in Afghanistan)."
(The Nation, August 10, 2002)

The newly elected Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Wales has warned Britain and the world that there is no justification for military invasion of Iraq.

Majority of the European countries, China, Russia, and quite naturally, all the Arab and Muslim countries are expressing their concern over this American plan, but the American leadership is trying to impose its own view by devising whimsical new principles under the cover of Sept. 11.

Pakistan government's crime of cooperating in the aggression and wrong action that America has taken against Osama bin Laden, al-Qaeda, and the Taliban, though it might be under coercion and extended only grudgingly, is unpardonable. Even then, General Pervez Musharraf has expressed doubt in his recent interview to a correspondent of New York on whether the Sept. 11 attacks were really the work of Osama bin Laden? He said:

Osama might have been involved in financing and planning the attack. Osama may not be directly involved in it. **(Dawn, Aug.9, 2002)**

This enraged the US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. The reality, however, is that the allegation is but a 'contention' for which no solid evidence has been provided to date, even the need to provide such evidence is not being recognized. And this is the problem that no one can answer. Why is it so?

The Outline of Global Politics

Whoever might have been responsible for the dastardly attacks, the way the American leadership has used them amply proves that the political leadership and military and economic administration in America were on the look of some such happening to tighten its grip, create an emotional and disturbing atmosphere in the name of patriotism, and try to make the world serve the American interests through new restrictions after the end of the Cold War. America has always needed a foe to meet its own objectives. It needed a new enemy after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the collapse of socialism. The Israeli lobby was busy in making the situation favorable for targeting Islam and Muslims. Academic discourse and media tactics were all dedicated to this purpose, but it lacked something. The events of Sept. 11 provided that anxiously awaited opportunity: Islam, Muslims, Jihad, religious education institutions, Shariah, Arab money, even the West's trusted Arab rulers became easy targets and international law and norms, democratic principles and values, historical ties and relations became irrelevant.

The salient features of the emerging political order are:

1. America is the world's sole superpower and has the right to do what it likes to do for its own interests. Others are under obligation to extend their cooperation to it: it is better if they extend it happily, or they would be compelled to comply or American would do what it deems fit in spite of them and their difference. The same approach is that of Israel and India who are America's "natural allies" and who are emboldened by the example set by America to do what they want to. They are proceeding just on the same lines and justifying their aggression and cruel policies.

The US national security advisor Ms. Condoleeza Rice has given expression to this haughty stand in the following words:

The Bush Administration would proceed from the firm ground of the national interest and not from the interest of an illusory international community.

The reason behind this, according to Michael Retner, president of the Center for Constitutional Rights, is:

There is not much backbone in the world against the United States. It has so many carrots and sticks. Some countries will snipe but the United States is so dominant right now it would take a lot to stop us.

Professor Allen Lichtman of history at the American University is compelled to say about the US president that:

In practice he can do almost whatever he wants in foreign affairs. There is little to check US power and presidential power.

As a result, America has become a 'hyper power' that considers itself above all rules and regulations, traditions and norms. This is what makes America and its president a threat to global peace, to tranquility and calm in human society. The famous US think tank CATO Institute's Gene Healy has cried out:

The idea that one man alone would have the power to launch a war of this magnitude would have the framers of the Constitution spinning in their graves.

The way America and its leadership have shaped themselves in the wake of Sept. 11 is a threat for America itself as well as the entire world. This is not merely a 'perceived' threat; it has practically taken the entire world in its grip.

2. If America wants to come out of any international treaty or accord, it can, unilaterally; if it wants to block any, it can openly try to do this. It 'unsigned' the Kyoto agreement after 'signing' it. It also moved away from the International Convention on Ballistic Missiles (ICBM), and is trying to silence Russia with doling out financial assistance in bribe.
3. After participating in consultations for six years for the establishment of the International Criminal Court and introducing dozens of amendments that served its interests, America tried its level best to halt the establishment of this court. When the requisite number of countries ratified it, America got active for rendering it ineffectual both within the United Nations and outside it through bilateral agreements. The concern is that America and its forces are not proceeded against for crimes against humanity. On the one hand, it is claimed that all humans are equal and all nations enjoy the equal status (the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the US Constitution are all based on these principles), but on the other hand, America wants that no American troop could be proceeded against for crimes against humanity in other countries. America is exerting pressure on other countries that their economic and military assistance would be stopped if they refuse to give exemption to American forces. It is a shameful attempt to establish a new kind of apartheid.
4. America does not tire in teaching the lesson of free trade to others but for itself violates the regulations of World Trade Organization (WTO). It recently announced a 30 per cent duty on the import of steel in spite of opposition of Europe and the rest of the world. It is providing subsidy for agriculture production that is harming the

exports of the poor countries of the world. This is how it is neglecting all the targets of economic assistance to the countries of the Third World; it does not hesitate from practically sabotaging the efforts to help them.

5. Individual's rights are being flouted in America. Thousands of people – especially Arabs and Muslims – have been arrested without warrant or any proof of guilt. Some 1,200 people are in jails without any trials for complete one year, while many have died during interrogation. What to talk of conducting proper trials, even their names are not being divulged. The efforts of human rights organizations in this regard have failed. This has compelled some judges to say that the administration's attitude is against the principles of justice and democratic norms and that it should at least reveal the names of the jailed people. (District Judge ruling of Aug. 26, 2002 calling for providing the names of those who are languishing in jails without trials within 15 days. The Washington Post in its issue of Oct. 10, 2001 and the New York Times in that of Nov. 10, 2001 had asked in their editorials for making public this information.)

Using Sept. 11 as an excuse, the American government has imposed the suppressive system of the medieval ages on a section of the population. Muslims, Arabs and Pakistan are its special targets. According to an estimate, more than 300 Pakistanis are passing through the ordeal.

6. A whole new system of intelligence and surveillance is being imposed that allows taping of phone, checking the mails, access to the Internet use and violation of all norms of privacy. Signals have been given to introduce a system of informers, which has surprised the media and the Congress members.

The government is using Sept. 11 to impose a sort of police state in the country. The daily Mirror, London, wrote "Mourn on the 4th July" on the eve of America's Independence Day. It lamented that "the US is now the world's leading rogue state."

At the international level, Afghanistan was the first target of attack. While neither Osama nor Mullah Omar could be captured, the US forces killed 3,620 innocent men, women and children in the bombing on civil populations from Oct. 7, 2001 to June 2002 in addition to the deaths of the Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters (exceeding 10,000) according to a careful estimate of the database of a professor of the Hampshire University. Then, the Northern Alliance perpetrated cruelties on the Afghan people in the name of fighting the Taliban and al-Qaeda that took place before the eyes of the American forces, for which America cannot be acquitted from its own responsibility. After Afghanistan, now the atmosphere is being created to attack Iraq. Forces and weapons are sent into the region and the bases of San Diego and Qatar are being prepared. Quite like Afghanistan, efforts are on to prop up a subservient regime in Iraq. Pakistan, Sudan, and Syria are on the list to be taken care of after the Iraq episode. Even Saudi Arabia has become a target of

criticism; its rulers are being blackmailed and conspiracies for internal rebellion are being hatched. The same game plan is being orchestrated for Sudan. ...Let's see what happens!

Flouting the international law and norms, the American leadership has devised new rules of the game under which it considers 'regime change' as its rights in a country that fails to retain its pleasure. Similarly, some preemptive step is contemplated to bypass the UN Charter. This has compelled even Henry Kissinger, who has otherwise been on the same side, to say that:

Regime change as a goal for military intervention challenges the international system established by the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, which established the principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other states. And the notion of justified preemption runs counter to modern international law, which sanctions the use of force in self-defense only against actual, not potential threats. **(Henry Kissinger, Los Angeles Times Syndicate – Dawn, Aug. 11, 2002)**

Henry Kissinger mentions the reservations of the European nations, the Arab countries and China. For Pakistan, he warns the implications of this approach:

The most interesting, and potentially fateful reaction may well be India's which will be tempted to apply the new principle of preemption against Pakistan.

Kissinger has warned America against proceeding on this line and that it should adhere to the international law. But, the advice of this 'guru' apparently looks like a lonely voice.

America has openly violated international norms and the Geneva Convention on the issue of war and prisoners of war. It did not change its attitude in spite of criticism from international institutions, the media of Europe and the Third World, and intellectuals. In Afghanistan, those who had surrendered were brutally killed in large numbers, their corpses were mutilated, civil settlements and wedding gatherings were targeted even after the end of war and attempts to cover-up these acts and to destroy the evidence were made. Then, the prisoners of war were taken to the Guantanamo Base in Cuba so that the American law could not apply on them. The way these people were kept under detention and the cruel treatment resulted in many deaths. This all is in open violation of the

Geneva Convention. No guilt has been proved after the lapse of eight months. According to the American newspapers, not a single person has been al-Qaeda member. In them are 30 Pakistanis, but there is no one to take them out of the ordeal.

If any person has benefited from this whole process, it is President Bush. His election as president was doubtful, but now he commands blind following, covers up financial scandals, and consolidating his presidency through political confrontation. Then, a big benefit goes to the military and weapons industry whose budget has been raised to the tune of \$400 billion. According

to the latest Newsweek report, the sale of arms of America, which is the largest trader of arms and weapons in the world, was going down since the year 2000. But now, this industry is receiving new orders from the government. The energy industry is also taking benefit of this situation. And, these are the real forces operating in this biggest and powerful 'democracy' of the world. The power against whom President Eisenhower had warned in his last address to the American nation at the conclusion of his presidency is now 'making hay' and getting strength to the extent that even the role of military in internal affairs is being contemplated in the name of 'national security'. The Congress and the liberal circles are worried about such prospects.

The words of Eisenhower have assumed extraordinary relevance in the post-Sept. 11 scenario. In this address on Jan. 17, 1961 he had said:

This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is now in the American experience. The total influence – economic, political, and even spiritual – is felt in every city, every statehouse, every office of the federal government. In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. The military-industrial complex should never be allowed to endanger our liberties or democratic process. We should take nothing for granted. **(Eisenhower: Soldier and President, Stephen E. Ambrose, Simon & Schuster, New York, pp. 536-7)**

The print of this military-industry nexus is evident from the American policy since Sept. 11. The genie has come out of the bottle and is affecting each and every aspect of life in America itself. The democratic process, the liberties, and the civilizational values that have been considered a result of struggle of centuries are now endangered – both at the global level and in America. The common man is living out the life under tension.

Surveys into how the Sept. 11 events and their aftermath have affected the psychology and mentality are quite revealing. William Schlesinger has published the results of his research based on the survey of 2,273 Americans in the latest issue of the journal of American Medical Association. These surveys show that mental tension, uncertainty, fear and sense of wilderness have all registered a rise since Sept. 11. A new term PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) has been adopted to describe this. The impact of the events of Sept. 11 is far deeper than all other kinds of trauma that range from rape to storms and earthquakes, and even the terrorist acts of Oklahoma. The profile of mental health in the country is that PTSD registered a raise of 4 per cent for the entire American nation and 11 per cent for the New York population for a couple of months since Sept. 11. Its effects are not likely to be short-lived, it is feared that they would afflict the whole span of life. In the words of William Schlesinger:

The condition, which can last a lifetime at its worst, has the potential of creating a substantial public health problem.

Another analysis shows that those who viewed the television longer have been more affected. While the average for those who viewed the TV for four hours was 7.5 percent, it was up to 18 per cent for those who viewed for 12 hours. And the problem is not restricted to the impact of Sept. 11 events. The fear, even after that horrible episode, is afflicting people in ever-new forms of anxiety and stress: whether it is in the form of Anthrax or some new kind of terrorism. While the whole nation is experiencing mental disorder and stress, the leadership is bent upon spreading this so-called war to the widths and breadths of the world with no one worried over the fact that the problem of terrorism cannot be eliminated with media war, or military intervention, or bombing the innocent in the name of search for the elusive enemy. Even the country is being thrown to the throes of uncertainty and fear, along with the people of other countries. The preparations of developing mini-nukes are on to strike at specific targets. The spadework for this is under way and the atmosphere to use them as the most effective weapons with the coming out of the restriction of NPT and CTBT. While military intervention is contemplated to deprive others of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), stockpiles of the same weapons are amassed and used blatantly, with warnings and more preparations of their use in future. What else the world can be expected to react to this brutality, coercion and 'getting away with it' other than showing its hatred? Yet, it is asked as if in a surprise as to "Why they hate us?" and "why are they against us?"; no one is prepared to think why the innocent and common people are rising in protest and revenge risking their own lives.

The Causes of Terrorism

Terrorism and the "war against terrorism" both are a challenge to humanity. The lesson that could have been learnt from Sept. 11 has been removed from in front of the eyes of the American nation and the world by the American leadership and the Jewish lobby that controls it in a very organized and global effort. And, the Western media has played a vital role in this regard. Terrorism is a heinous crime against humanity, but, like every other crime, it cannot be rooted out without identifying its causes and supportive factors. The American leadership did not wake up by the events of Sept. 11 that shook the entire world. Instead of objective analysis and realistic response, it used this human catastrophe for its own political and economic ends and securing its own interests. This failure to rise to the occasion has the potential to result in even a bigger catastrophe than the destruction of Sept. 11. The need is to understand and come to terms with the nature of the problem and effort is made to wake up those who are not moved by mere interests, those who endear justice and truth, human welfare and security.

It is imperative to distinguish three things from one another: use of force in human problems, violence, and terrorism. The use of force can be both for truth and untruth, right and wrong, for seeking justice and for perpetrating cruelty. For peace and tranquility in human society, it is imperative to ensure justice and fair play, and the supremacy of law. This is why discipline and use of force to some extent is but necessary for authority at all levels. The state is defined as having

'coercive power' that is essential for keeping the society away from plunging into anarchy. The principles punishment and punitive action under the system of a country and war and Jihad to meet external threats are part of this framework. The use of force should really be in the observance of lofty aims and objectives, consensus national goals, moral values and law. It can be justified only as a tool for enforcing the letter and spirit of law. The use of force for good causes and for the protection of rights is noble, and not a curse. It becomes a curse only when it becomes independent of morality, values and law.

The use of force takes the form of violence when it is resorted to for personal aims and interests without any relation with religious, moral and legal norms. Then, it results in killings and bloodshed, loot and plunder, and oppression. This is why violence is a crime and should be eliminated.

Terrorism is different from use of force and violence. It is the use of force out of deprivation and helplessness for political ends whose aim, instead of achieving personal gains, is to draw the attention of the opponent and to make it fearful with such a surprise act that afflicts damage and draws attention to the cause for which violence is committed. This is why it is called the weapon of the weak. (See, Huntington's book Clash of Civilizations).

The question is not about its being legitimate or illegitimate. It is imperative to understand the reality of the problem to realize that terrorism is an evil and a condemnable activity but it cannot be met with violence, war, or with more blatant use of force. It is an established fact of history; the history of the past 200 years stands witnessed to it. The movements that emerged in response to the colonial oppression, external influence, and negation of social, economic and political rights – though they might have resorted to violence and terrorist acts – can never be purged with the use of force. After all the show of power, the situation could be reformed and bloodshed stopped only when efforts were made to remove the real causes and political solutions to the problems were sought. The war against terrorism is like the war against poverty, disease or fear. It can be fought the way the latter are fought.

Elimination of terrorism is possible only when its causes are removed. The question is: what are the factors that force and convince the common folk to risk their lives? Cherie Blair, the wife of the British Prime Minister, has said about the Palestinian suicide bombers that the problem cannot be solved unless the factors that compel the youth to endanger their lives. But, Bush and Sharon think that with their use of force they can stop those who are fighting for their rights from struggling. This is a recipe for more confrontation, bloodletting, violence and further promotion of terrorism. The British MP John Galloway has written in The Guardian, London:

This is a recipe for endless war and global turmoil. It is a recipe for the proliferation of terrorism and the creation of thousands of Bin Laden's throughout the Muslim World and beyond. **(The Guardian/the News, Aug. 13, 2002)**

Mark Bergess of the US Center for Defense Information has rightly commented on the President's declaration of war that:

The President's declaration of a 'crusade' against Bin Laden just feeds into Bin Laden's world view, and I don't want to do that.

The view of Mr. Parchini of the RAND Corporation has been recently published in the American papers:

When you look at that situation of terrorism, you don't see a simply one-dimensional political decision. It is a combination of factors that motivate them.

Jose T. Almonte, advisor to the Philippines' president, has written in the International Herald Tribune of the last week of July 2002 that:

Pulling out the roots of terrorism will unavoidably involve diplomatic, political, economic, financial and cultural measures, no less than police and military action....At bottom, radicalism is a rebellion of the excluded, a rebellion that feeds on the unfulfilled longings and desires of impoverished people living on the margins of an unattainable communist world.....In many parts of the developing world, the sealer state has not lined up to its promises of political freedom, economic prosperity and social justice. **(International Herald Tribune / Khaleej Times, July 30, 2002)**

It is true, but Almonte has said the half-truth. Along with the failure of secularism and lack of social justice, political oppression and foreign occupations are also the important causes. Political subjugation and occupation in Palestine, Kashmir, and Mentanao and many other regions, American military occupation and intervention in others are fuelling fires of hatred and revenge. President Bush could not help say with regard to the causes of Sept. 11 events, and Kissinger has quoted them in his recent article, that:

It would not have been possible but for the tacit cooperation of societies that, in the words of George W. Bush 'oppose terror but tolerate the hatred that produces terror. **(Los Angeles Times Syndicate/Dawn, August 11, 2002)**

While Bush and Kissinger came so far, they forgot to recognize what fuels this hatred. Kissinger admits that:

American strategy must try to overcome legitimate causes of those resentments.

Yet, in the same vein, the emphasis is on teaching a lesson to individuals and governments who are suspected of supporting terrorists. It appears that interests, anger and rage have blinded them; or, having come so far, their second natural concern would have been about finding out the causes of

terrorism and their remedy. The real cause is the system of oppression and injustice which allows Israel to continue its illegitimate occupation of Palestine and commit state-terrorism, and India to retain its occupation of Kashmir and commit state-terrorism there. Russian occupation of Chechnya and the Philippine government's military action in Mindanao are all state-terrorism. In other words, the design of American domination at the global level and its military, political, economic and cultural invasions are the causes that have compelled the oppressed people of the world to rise in rebellion and then to commit violence.

Not to understand this reality or to ignore it deliberately is the root-cause of all rot and a reason for plunging the whole world into chaos and anarchy. The cause is same in Palestine and Kashmir, Afghanistan and Chechnya, Basque (Spain) and Mindanao (Philippines). Insensitivity to the problems of the people, getting away with unjust and cruel policies, indifference towards the causes of unrest and anxiety, and obsession with the apparent and the superficial to the extent of neglect of the ground reality and beneath-the-surface facts are the ailments of today's leaderships. The war against al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and its implications and results are a prominent example of this problem. Action was taken to punish the 'perpetrators' of 9/11 and to catch Osama 'live or dead', the Taliban were punished because Osama was in Afghanistan in their shelter. Afghanistan was destroyed in the name of freedom, but the condition of its freedom today is such that American marines are required to protect the president that has come to the power with the American backing. Afghans cannot provide protection to their own president. The country is once again divided and torn to pieces. Both the sides are attacking one another and there is no semblance of peace in the country. There are no signs of reconstruction and American commanders are saying that their stay in Afghanistan is for an indefinite period, like the one in Korea. Al-Qaeda people, who are blamed for every evil and are held as arch enemies by America, are still the heroes of the Afghans. These are the facts that cannot be refuted, it is another problem if America and its allies, including General Pervez Musharraf, are unable to see them.

In the action against al-Qaeda in Pakistan's Northern Areas, 10 troops were killed. Its report that the weekly Time has published is very revealing. One Abdur Rauf Niazi who was an officer in an intelligence agency of the Pakistan army and was leading the campaign to hunt down al-Qaeda in the region, was killed in the encounter. When his body was taken to his home, his father who had fed and nourished him, said:

And Niazi's own father considers his son a traitor to Muslims. He refused to say the customary funeral rites. "Let Bush come and pray for my son." The father said, "I won't do it." **(Time, July 29, 2002, p.15)**

Robert Fisk, who is touring Afghanistan these days, reports how much reverence the common people of Afghanistan pay to the martyrs of al-Qaeda. His account is being published in the British daily The Independent, and merits reading. The situation on Aug. 13, 2002, some 8 months after

achieving freedom from the Taliban reflects from his description of a graveyard of the martyrs of al-Qaeda:

They are honored as saints. Beneath the grey mounds of dust and dried mud lie the martyrs of al-Qaeda. They are Arabs and Pakistanis and Chechens and Kazekhs and Kashmiris and all if you believe the propaganda are hated and loathed by the mature Pakhtun people of Kandhar. NOT TRUE! For while the US Special Force Cruise the streets of this broadening hot city in their 4x4s, the people of Kandhar visit this bleak graveyard with the reverence of worshippers. They tend the graves in their hundreds. On Fridays they come in their thousands, travelling hundreds of miles. The Qandhar Qabrestan, the place of graves, is a POLITICAL as well as RELIGIOUS lesson for all who come here.

Attracted by what, the foreigners wonder? By the rumours and legends of healing? By the idea that these resisted the foreigners to the end, preferred to die rather than surrender that the non-Afghan martyres had fought like Afghans? Perhaps it is as well the American Special Forces boys don't drop by for a visit. They might see something that would and should worry them. **(The Independent / The Nation, 13 august, 2002, p.17)**

It is not just the American soldiers that feel embarrassed to see the situation taking this turn, American leadership, and even that of Pakistan, are all collaborators in the crime. But, does closing the eyes before a danger remove it?

Robert Fisk is not alone in narrating the ground realities and highlighting the causes and factors contributing to the problem. The weekly Newsweek ran a detailed article (Aug. 19, 2002) on al-Qaeda. It too admits the same facts. Though the soil is Pakistan's, but those who have given their lives are the same Mujahids who have been a headache for America. In an encounter, 10 Mujahids were martyred and 6 soldiers were killed. While there was no one to inquire about the slain soldiers, people gathered around the graves of the martyrs. The Newsweek reports:

The graves of the 10 have become a local shrine, draped with banners: LONG LIVE AL-QAEDA! LONG LIVE TALIBAN! THESE MEN ARE HOLY MARRTYRES! A visitor at the sight told Newsweek, "I have received the anti-American spirit from visiting the shrine. **(Newsweek, august 19, 2002, p.14)**

The lava is boiling under the ground. The storms of hatred are gathering momentum, but are still contained in the clouds of human hearts. The ground realities cannot be refuted. The causes and various factors are leveling the ground for revolution the way to which winds through feelings of hatred, anxiety, unrest and rebellion. The waves of revolution cannot be stopped with the use of force and by disdain to realities. There is a wide gulf between the designs and plans of the US leadership and the public sentiment, feelings and aspirations; it is the biggest obstacle in the way of formulating a realistic strategy and policy. No problem in the world is insolvable, but the solution of problems requires realistic review of the situation and deep analysis of the causes and

their removal after identifying them. The over-dose of power has caused the loss of senses and the vision is blinded by the dust of propaganda. All the attention is diverted to the symptoms and apparent symbols of the ailment. This is to the extent that the real causes are being overlooked. But, this is what giving rise to further threats and plunging the whole of humanity to the fires of confrontation and bloodshed.

It is unfortunate that the American leadership failed to take the lesson from the eye-opening events of Sept. 11. The lesson of Sept. 11 is quite clear: the challenge of violence and terrorism cannot be met with violence and terrorism. It is a sincere understanding of the causes of public anxiety, hatred and rebellion and the reform of the situation that can ensure peace and tranquility that would result in eliminating the oppression and transgression of all kinds and restoring to people their rights so that they can decide their affairs independently and with dignity – and the rich and the poor, the powerful and the weak, the big and the small all live a life in the atmosphere of friendship and brotherhood with mutual cooperation and understanding.

It should be remembered that peace and coercion, security and oppression, freedom and domination of a few cannot coexist. Freedom can last as long as it is for all, the rich can be safe as long as all have two times meals, peace and tranquility are possible when law is the same for all alike and no one is bigger or smaller in the eye of law. The way American leadership adopted in the wake of the events of Sept. 11, and the entire world has become a hub of their fallout activities, is not the way of peace and security, justice and truth. It is the way of more destruction. The only way to prevent this destruction is to open up the eyes to see the facts, to accept the realities with an open mind, to take a deep analysis of the situation instead of taking a superficial view or being reactive, and to remove the causes of the rot. (On the Palestine issue, Janet Reeding has offered an analysis and solution to a complex problem in just one sentence. It is noteworthy because it represents a healthy approach about all controversial issues. He writes:

The Israeli government cannot expect these suicide bombings to stop if it is not willing to give these people what legally belongs to them. **(Newsweek, August 12, 2002, p.8)**

The well-wishers of humanity, irrespective of the religion, the land or the class they belong to, can play a very significant role. A huge responsibility lies on the shoulders of the Muslim world and the Pakistani nation. However gloomy might be the situation, we should not lose hope for brighter prospects and silver lining along the horizon.
