

ELIMINATION OF TERRORISM OR  
BEGINNING OF NEW CRUSADES

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TERJUMAN-UL-QURAN

October 2001

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## Elimination of Terrorism or Beginning of New Crusades

by Professor Khurshid Ahmad

The 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2001 has become a black, torturous and unforgettable day in the history of America. It is being said that the tragedy on this day shook to the roots not only America but the entire Western world, just as the Great Crash of the US Stock Market some 72 years ago in 1929 and the Japanese attack on the Pearl Harbor some 60 years ago in 1941 (in which about 2,500 American were killed) had metamorphosed American economy, politics and global role. After the Cold War, the trumpet of global and self-propagated eternal, domination of America and imperialism was blown with full force. Even 'the end of history' was announced. But this all reduced to rubbles with the collapse of the two towers of the World Trade Center and it is feared that what President Bush has termed as the first war of the 21<sup>st</sup> century may become a starting point of a new hot and cold war. Even greater is the danger of its becoming a precursor to new crusades between the West and the Muslim world.

The 110-storey World Trade Center that was constructed 23 years ago with the cost of \$ 1 billion over an area of 16 acres, that has given to New York its new identity, where 50,000 people worked, and whose annual rent exceeded \$ 3 billion, had become a symbol of financial and economic power of America and a sign of grandeur of global capitalism but also its economic capital. Similarly, Pentagon was like a walled-city, where 24,000 people worked and which the symbol of American global military might was. These two buildings were reduced to rubbles in the span of one hour after being hit by three hijacked American airplanes. While the destruction of these two buildings and death of thousands of people were horrendous enough, it lashed at today's sole super-power whose defense budget accounts for 36 percent of the total defense expenses of the entire world and on its reputation and standing in such a way that done away with the myth of America's invincibility. The defense system and governance of America came to a complete standstill for quite some time, and the global power that is now roaring with all force actually remained without any head of state for 24 hours. President, Vice President, Speaker of the Congress were running for safety wherever it could be found – in the air or in the under-ground digs. This has now precedence in the history of this century. The ordeals that the American leadership passed through after the attacks and what was evident from its appearance and statements can be described as shock, humiliation, anger, wrath and fury, retaliation and revenge and throes of madness.

### Worrisome Attitude

It is now about three weeks since the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Yet, America and the Western world is still in the state of confusion and perturbation. While there is uncertainty all over, signs of "doing something" are ringing alarm bells. As to realize the proverb 'to make the innocent suffer for the sin of the guilty', Arabs and Muslims are being targeted,

Osama bin Ladin has become the object for wrath and fury and preparations are continuing for attack on Afghanistan. The elephant is about to blow the gnat, but this is a perverse attempt to divert attention from real factors and causes of its failures, hate and incredibility.

It is disturbing that review and analysis of the situation in the light of the principles of truth and justice is almost extinct (apart from some feeble voices). Those who have power and who are entrusted with global leadership are behaving like wounded beast with their avowals to eliminate anyone whom they suspect. They are all out to do that. President Bush says that it is a declaration of war, beyond being a terrorist act, but fails to tell who is the enemy in this war, which state or force is the opponent, and where this war is going to take place. In the Pearl Harbor bombing, the invader and its location both were known. Today, neither the perpetrators of the terrorist acts are known nor is it clear who supported the suicide attackers and where they are now. To make the situation even worse, this is being called 'war on civilization' and the world is thus being divided into two to suggest that the West constitutes the civilized world while others are savages. It is being said that not only the terrorists will be eliminated but the states that provide shelter to them will also meet the same fate. [It has been forgotten that America itself provided shelter to the terrorists of IRA and America was not just backing numerous armed groups that carried out terrorism in countries like Cuba and dozens in Latin America besides Iraq, Libya, and Iran etc., but the CIA and certain other lobbies have quite overtly been training and arming them.] Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld have quite unequivocally said, "One of the goals is ending states that sponsor terrorism". An army of intellectuals, writers, and media people is advocating for revenge and state oppression. Former Secretary of State Lawrence Eagle Burger says:

"There is only one way to begin to deal with people like this, and that is you have to kill some of them even if they are not immediately directly involved in this thing."

A guru of American foreign policy, and guilty of genocide of tens of thousands in Vietnam, Cambodia, Chili and other countries, Henry Kissinger says that while nobody knows whether Bin Ladin is involved in these acts or not, but immediate punitive action is necessary even though it is not enough. Action against the whole network and against the countries where traces of this network are to be found is the real goal.

"But then the Government should be charged with a systematic response that, one hope, will end the way the attack on Pearl Harbor ended – with the destruction of the system that is responsible for it." **(The Washington Post, Sept. 12)**

His advice for America is to go alone if other countries do not cooperate; it should not wait for any consensus. This is what an intellectual and responsible person has to say, while the general trend is reflecting from the following three examples.

Rich Lowry writes in the *Washington Post*:

“If we flatten part of Damascus or Tehran or whatever it takes, that is part of the solution.” **(Sept.13)**

Steve Durleevy writes in the *New York Post*:

“The response to this unimaginable 21<sup>st</sup> century Pearl Harbor should be as simple as it is swift – kill the bastards. A gunshot between the eyes, blow them to smithereens, poison them if you have to. As to cities or countries that host these worms, bomb them with basketball combs.” **(Sept. 12)**

In the *New York Daily News*, Ann Comlter has gone to the extent of saying:

“This is no time to be precarious about locating the exact individuals directly involved in this particular terrorist attack. We should invade these countries, kill their leaders. We were not punctilious about locating and punishing only Hitler and his top officers. We carpet-bombed German cities, we killed civilians. That is war. And this is war.” **(Sept. 12)**

This is how an extreme atmosphere is being created and the one that has Arabs and Muslims as its targets. Using the term of ‘crusade’, President Bush has served the purpose of adding fuel to fire. Islam is being presented as a religion that encourages terrorism and Muslims as terrorist group. This is the consequence of this approach and policy that such incidents, which run into hundreds, have taken place in America and Britain in these days where mosques, schools, Islamic centers, Muslim homes, and even passersby Muslim women have become the targets of abuse. Some 300 revengeful acts have been registered in America alone, and it is continuing. Irony is that not only Muslims but also Sikhs are being maltreated and killed just for their appearance. Is this the civilization and higher system of life that is said to be threatened by terrorism!

### The Stand of Islamic Movements

Whatever might be the attitude of America and the West and whatever language they might be using to express their emotions, our attitude as Muslims and the Ummah should be based on truth, justice and moderation. Instead of retaliating with blow for blow, we should adopt the language of logic and adhere to the truth for this is what Qur’an commands:

“And when you judge between the people, you judge with justice. (Al-Nisa 4:58) O Believers! Be steadfast in righteousness and just in giving witnesses for the sake of Allah; the enmity of any people should not so provoke you as to turn you away from justice. Do justice for it is akin to piety.” **(Al-Maida 5:8)**

Protection of human life and respect for it are among the basic teachings of Islam, and there is no distinction between Muslim and non-Muslim, man and woman, friend and foe. The value of life is equal for all and to take one's life without justification is in violation of the commands of Allah and His Prophet. Allah says 'We made Adam and his progeny respectable and dignified', not just Muslims or the People of Scriptures. Also:

"Do not kill any soul whose killing has been forbidden by Allah, except by right."  
**(Al-Asra 17:33)**

"He, who killed any person, unless it is a person guilty of man-slaughter, or of spreading chaos in the land, should be looked upon as though he had slain all mankind, and he who saved one life should be regarded as though he had saved the lives of all mankind."  
**(Al-Maida 5:32)**

How can a religion that imparts such teachings tolerate the killing of innocent people in an act of terrorism? This is why Muslims not only in America and Europe but from all over the world, their movements and governments of almost all Muslim countries have felt shock over the death of thousands of people in the terrorist acts of Sept. 11. They have felt it deeply in the cores of their hearts and have condemned it without any reservation and have called for bringing the perpetrators to the book. To us, this is not an American loss, but of the entire humanity; the sorrow is not restricted to America, it is shared by the entire humanity. The fact that has further identified this loss and sorrow with us is that 1,000 of the total 5,000 people that were killed in the World Trade Center, who hailed from 63 countries and who included followers of all religions, were Muslims. This means that out of every five, one was Muslim!

More than 100 leaders of Islamic movements, scholars and thinkers of the Muslim world first condemned this 'killing without right' in their communiqué on Sept. 12 and then enunciated Islamic view and stand of Muslims through another statement on Sept. 18. While they condemned 'killing without right', they also warned against revenge and retaliatory 'killing without right' and with distinct wisdom and boldness they upheld the principles of justice and rule of law. This statement reflects the sentiments of the entire Muslim Ummah:

"We have unequivocally condemned the dastardly terrorist attack on establishments in New York and Washington, whose victims belong to some forty countries and major religions of the world. Islam upholds sanctity of human life as the Qur'an declares that killing one innocent human being is like killing the entire human race. The tragedy of the Sept. 11 is a crime against humanity and the Muslims all over the world mourn all victims of this aggression as a common loss of America and the whole world. We also affirm that victims of terrorism in all parts of the world deserve equal sympathy and concern and all those who stand for the equality of human kind must condemn and fight terrorism in all parts of the world.

We also uphold and affirm the principle that whoever is responsible for acts of terrorism against human beings; individual, group or government, must be brought to book and punished for that without let or discrimination. But any attempt to arbitrarily punish people in the name of 'war against terrorism' without establishing through an impartial process the guilt of the suspected would also constitute an act of terrorism and cannot be allowed or condoned. Independent proof of guilt is a minimum demand of principles and justice and natural and international law. We, therefore, appeal to all Governments of the world, particularly, the US Government not to resort to any arbitrary or unilateral use of force only on the basis of suspicion nor try to become the accuser, the prosecutor, the judge, and the executor rolled into one. We also besiege the Secretary General of the UN and the leaders of all Arab, Muslim and European countries to play their role in saving the world from wanton bloodshed and escalation of violence leading to greater conflicts and confrontations between the states and the people of the world. Terrorism can be fought only by resort to means that are just, judicious and conducive to peace and tranquility in the world. We must not be a party to or even passive spectators to steps are smack of vendetta, retaliation, arrogance and international brinkmanship. Let all people stand for justice and make a concerted effort to fight terrorism by punishing its perpetrators through due process of law and also strive for the elimination of all the injustices, exploitations and hegemonistic policies that lie at the root of much terrorism in the world." **(Sept. 18)**

This is the principled and realistic stand of the Muslim Ummah. It is the duty of all Muslim governments and organizations to be firm on this stand at this critical juncture with wisdom, sincerity, and courage, and not to surrender before force, coercion, and pressure. They should neither be overwhelmed by the invasion of propaganda, nor should adopt such a response that is removed from truth and righteousness.

### Embarrassing Failure of the US System:

The question that is most important at the time is that how all this happened and who are really responsible for it? This cannot be answered by mere suspicion or resorting to revenge, it calls for impartial investigation, inquiry and exploration, criticism and stocktaking, and search for reality. Unfortunately, attention is being diverted from this and a blunder is being committed by adopting the approach of dealing with problems in haste. It is sad that there is none who could dare and stand out to say that 'the king should first look to himself to recognize his nakedness'.

It still needs investigation to determine who the perpetrators of the criminal act were, what were their objectives, and whose backing they had? But the foremost question is that why the failure of the American system – especially that of the systems of national security, intelligence, and police –

and those who are responsible for this failure are being totally overlooked? Even in the case of a train accident, the responsible in the department are held to account before the commencement of investigation for the causes. American intelligence system is the biggest and costliest system in the world. The annual budget of the CIA alone is \$ 30 billion and it's about 100,000 workers remain active throughout the world round the clock. Then, there is FBI that is responsible for internal security. Its annual budget is \$ 3 billion. It has 55 centers and 27,800 workers in America. One fifth of its budget goes for information gathering and intelligence. It is using the latest surveillance technology. Yet another National Reconnaissance Office carries out round the clock surveillance of every walk of life with the help of spy satellites. Its annual budget is \$ 6.2 billion. There is National Security Authority that has 21,000 employees. It has the best system for intelligence as well as experts of all the important languages of the world. Besides these, there are nine more agencies that are there to do surveillance and intelligence, working under the military and departments of finance, communications, and power and water. Each of these agencies has an annual budget of \$ 1 billion. In addition to all these, there is one National Imagery and Mapping Agency whose annual budget is \$ 1.2 billion and whose only task is to keep track of whatever is happening on the American soil. This is how intelligence bodies alone have an annual budget of \$ 50 billion for national security and safety. Apart from the intelligence agencies, Non-Intelligence Agencies have an annual budget of \$ 27 billion. This means that America spends \$ 77 billion merely for intelligence and other information. **(Ref. Weekly Guardian, Sept. 20-26, p 5)**

In spite of all these arrangements, the system could not avert the multi-dimension and well-coordinated plan in which, according to what America officialdom says, 19 hijackers were involved, who started their activity from two airports. And at least 30 more were also involved with them, according to estimates, who were planning for months, living in big cities, traveling to Canada and Germany, dining and wining in clubs, joining gymnastic clubs for body-building, and were learning flying in aviation schools as their regular members. If the American leadership does not get a signal of such schemes and horrible plans even after spending such huge amounts and in spite of having the most sophisticated and latest system, then how can it be intelligible to let the system go unchecked and continue without being held accountable? Neither the CIA chief has resigned, nor the FBI chief dismissed. Nor has the Attorney General, who heads the whole system, moved a bit; rather, he has the cheek to say that 'the question is not of justice, it is about revenge!' The fact is that it is the American system that has failed. And putting the blame at the door of Osama bin Ladin cannot cover up the failure of American system.

This failure becomes more embarrassing when we see that possibilities and threats of terrorism were already talking about. The same World Trade Center had been subject to a bomb attack in February 1993 that had claimed 6 lives. The tragic Oklahoma incident, which was the doing of an American terrorist Timothy McVeigh, had taken place in April 1995. This had resulted in the death of 268 people. McVeigh had been executed in spite of appeals for mercy that came from within and outside the country, just two months ago, and the danger of some revengeful act from this

group was there. The terrorist acts of Aug. 1998 that had targeted American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania had resulted in the death of 224, and the case was in progress. American ship USS Cole had been attacked in Oct. 2000 and 17 people were killed. This case was also in the courts. The Intelligence Commission of the Senate had warned against possible terrorist activity in March this year and its report had been published. Only three weeks ago, CIA had cautioned by publishing the picture of the two who were later to be suspected of hijacking on Sept. 11. Another warning was received on Sept. 7. ...The failure of all under-ground and on the ground agencies in the presence of all this is a cause of concern and calls for pondering and rethinking. But this finds no mention either in the statements of the President or in the verbal media war.

### Osama bin Ladin?

One individual, Osama bin Ladin, who has been leading a nomadic and exiled life for 10 years and who has neither telephone nor any other means of contact with the world, has been the focus of all suspicion. He is in such a country that is under strict surveillance for years, which has neither modern technology nor the diplomatic and communication facilities, which has no facility, let alone the world media, to convey its message in English to the world, which is under sanctions for years, whose communication system is ineffectual, and whose banks cannot make business transactions with the world outside. Yet, it is propagated that he is doing great wonders from inside his cave in Afghanistan. There is also a clamor about his wealth though the fact of the much talked about \$ 300 million (that even if true are nothing comparable to \$ 77 billion of intelligence and \$ 350 billion of defense budget) is that Osama bin Ladin had inherited \$ 80 million, not \$ 300 million, from his father some 12 years ago. Whatever he had of this amount was frozen in 1996, when he was stripped of his Saudi nationality. After this, he could neither make investments, nor maintain bank accounts. Nor his participation in any business is practically possible. The question is what he could do with a few million dollars, even if he had them, and for how long? The Economist has admitted in its editorial notes that there is great exaggeration about the wealth of Osama bin Ladin (Sept. 22, p 17). The reality is that Osama and his associates are facing acute financial hardships:

“A doubt is raised, however, by recent testimony in the trail of the East African bombers. Mr. Bin Laden’s former associates suggested that he was running short of funds. They also described endless bickering and confusion among his men. His former accountant, America’s star witness, stormed out of al-Qaeda after being refused a loan.”

**(The Economist, Sept. 15, p.19)**

If these are the facts about financial resources, then all the campaign against Osama is nothing but concoction. Nothing has been proved against Osama even in the case of attacks on embassies that are being heard in the American court. The Economist in its article admits that: However, prosecutors could not prove that Mr. Bin Laden ordered the attack.



## Who is behind the attacks?

If it is not possible for Osama bin Ladin and Afghanistan to carry out such a well-coordinated, multi-dimensional, and high-tech scheme and nor can any other Arab organization be expected to do this (and American and Western media and governments are not even hinting at other possibilities other than Osama bin Ladin), the question is who is behind these gruesome acts. We wish to bring to the attention some hypotheses based on historical facts and current evidences.

The first possibility is that this is an activity of some American group that is rebellious towards the society and is disenchanted with the system of governance. The recent history provides quite a number of examples that give credence to such apprehensions. Though there had never been a dearth of crimes in the country, the incidents of killing school children in quite an organized way took place in recent times and the death of 12 students in one-go in a California school is fresh in memories. Timothy McVeigh killed 268 people in Oklahoma and expressed the wish in the court of killing even more. Now, these attacks have taken place within two months after Timothy's execution. This terrorist activity can be the doing of Timothy's group. Another terrorist group 'Jaco' is organized in the Texas, the state President Bush belongs to. This group torches to gut a whole locality. David and his followers too are like a renegade group and terrorist activity by them cannot be ruled out.

One angle of thinking over the problem is to ponder over the question 'who benefited from these attacks?' There are elements in America itself that want to strengthen their grip of state institutions and who are for various restrictions on the freedom of expression and action. These elements want to create such an environment where democratic freedom could be curbed and the grip of these dominating interest groups is further fortified. Then there are institutions, including security agencies that desire to have more government resources at their disposal. The country's arms industry may as well have a role.

These apprehensions are substantiated by the information that is being gathered from the statistics of the surprisingly extraordinary activity at the Stock Exchange prior to the attacks. The commerce reporter of the daily Independent, London, relates that on Sept. 6 (it is pertinent to note that Sept. 8 and 9 were close days for being Saturday and Sunday) extraordinary activity was noticed in the sale of shares of the two airlines whose planes were used in the Sept. 11 events and whose share value has nose-dived after the events. This had been overlooked at that time, but now the question is raised as to why this was not noticed. The United Airlines made 2,000 contracts in a single day and this was 285 times higher of its earlier average of daily business. Its share value was \$ 30 on that day which dropped to \$ 18 after the attacks. Likewise, the share value of the American Airlines remained 60 times higher of its earlier average for two or three days before the events. Also, the shares of two international financial companies, Morgan Stanley and Marsh & McLennan, recorded 25 times and 100 times higher sale in those days as compared to

their earlier average. While writing in *The Independent*, London, Jon Nagarian, an expert on the trends of investments, expresses his astonishment on the extraordinary business. (***The Independent*, Sept. 20**)

It clearly appears that some elements were aware of what was going to happen and that they earned millions in the process.

Yet, Israel drew maximum benefit out of this terrorist activity. It exploited the events to make the Palestinians the object of American anger and fury, to cover up its own crimes, and to sabotage the so-called peace process. Within half an hour of the attacks, Henry Kissinger named Osama bin Ladin and called for eliminating his entire network. As soon as the attacks took place, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon declared that 'Arafat is our bin ladin', and having said this he also cancelled his scheduled meeting with Yasser Arafat.

This is also a mystery that International Herald Tribune's list of the dead that belonged to 68 countries has none from Israel. A large number of Jews resides in New York and World Trade Center was reported to have more than 4,000 Jewish workers, but the information that has come to fore till now has no mention of Jews. There was news of arrest and investigation against 5 or 6 Israelis but this was immediately swept under the carpet. Stern Intel of Canada reported that the US intelligence sources suspect Israel's Mossad for the terrorist acts. In his condolence message, Iran's Supreme Leader Khamenei underlined the same. (***Tehran Times*, Sept. 19**)

A glance at the history of Israel and Zionist movement gives credence to the suspicion of Mossad's role in the terrorist acts. During the Second World War, Zionist terrorists had drowned a ship that was carrying Jew exiles merely because the British government had refused the entry of these illegal Jew people into Palestine. Thus they staged a bloody drama to affect the world opinion. The destruction of Prince Edward Hotel of Jerusalem is part of this terrorist series. Israel attacked with missile and drowned an American navy ship USS Liberty prior to the 1967 war just because it had monitored Israeli preparations for attack on Egypt.

With this background and with the political advantages that Israel is extracting as well as making the Arabs an object of hate and revenge throughout the Western world, the apprehension that Israeli intelligence that has the capability and skills for this kind of operation is behind the recent terrorist acts gains credence. Quite similar was the drama of bombing of two 8-storey buildings in Moscow and Wulgadonisk (Sept. 13, 1999) in which 300 people were killed and which was used for military action and invasion of Chechnya.

In the backdrop of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, the Independent's Patrick Cockburn writes about the feelings of people of Moscow. He says that only one out ten believes that Chechens were behind these bombings. People are of the view that it was the people in the Kremlin who did it to remain in power.

This is the dynamics of Machiavellian politics! The reality of what happened in New York and Washington would of course be known one day, yet what is becoming clear is that there is some 'cote faible' that is being covered up.

Contradictory information about those who are alleged to be involved in the hijacking of the planes makes the entire affair doubtful. While they are said to be the Mujahids of Al-Qaeda, the stories of their wining and dining, dancing and womanizing are also narrated. What is the correlation in the life of Jihad and heavenly ideals and the life of pleasures and gaiety? It is evident that those who are concocting 'facts' are unaware of even the basics of the norms of Jihad and nature of martyrdom in Islam. One of the 19 who are alleged to be involved in the hijacking is Christian. Was he waging Jihad and aspired for martyrdom? Five of these are alive, living in Saudi Arabia and Morocco, and have nothing to do with the hijacking of the planes. Rather, three of them have said that they would sue American media institutions for defamation. It is quite clear that the names that are being presented forward are fictitious and real culprits are untraced.

This is also worth pondering over that Arabs were blamed and maligned for the Oklahoma incident. A countrywide campaign was started against them. It was coincidentally that Timothy McVeigh was grabbed and it was revealed that it was an American terrorist who had done the horrible act. The facts that came to fore during the ensuing case indicated towards the involvement of up to 500 terrorists, but the group was so organized that Timothy did not let even the shadow of doubt be cast on the two that were arrested along with him. And they were acquitted in spite of all circumstantial evidence. The statements of Timothy before the court are of great significance. He not only confessed to carrying out terrorism but also declared it justified. In clear words he said he wanted to warn America and that killing people in as great numbers as possible was his aim. He did not beg pardon till the last moment, rather recited a poem in which he took pride in his accomplishment. There are hundreds of his ilks in his own group and there are dozens of such groups in America.

The highly organized manner, the high performance, and the coordination that mark the events of Sept. 11 make it almost certain that these are not done by some outside group. Such an activity is possible only with the participation of America's own highly trained, competent, well-connected, and insiders. They have used Arab names as a shield while the government and media are trying to cover up their failure or turning blind eye to the real culprits by attempting to find scapegoats in Osama bin Ladin and Afghanistan. This is criminal and tantamount to open aggression against the Muslim world.

It is a simple principle that action on mere suspicion and before the guilt of the culprit is proved is unjust, cruel and root cause of disorder and lawlessness. Today, America is running amok for its power and is talking of eliminating not only some individuals but also nations and countries, returning them to the Stone Age and warning of their annihilation and is disdainfully ridiculing

those who are calling for rule of law, global justice, and prudence and wisdom. This is against the nature and unacceptable to humanity.

### Causes of Terrorism

American and Western leadership should also ponder over the reality of what they term as terrorism and for whose elimination they are gearing up to make it the longest and multi-dimensional war of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and how to solve such problems and issues.

The aspect of terrorism that is indefensible, most condemnable, and calls for effective check is the adoption of such ways and means that result in the waste of innocent human lives, albeit for justified political objectives. This is an unpardonable crime and to dissuade people from resorting to such ways is a service to humanity and well-wish for even those misled people who commit these acts either consciously or for being swept by the tides of hard times. Yet, what merits attention is that if the justified and peaceful ways of reform and solution of issues are closed, if the people are kept deprived of their rights by use of force, obstinacy, self-interest, prejudice, arrogance, material and military superiority, and regional or international hegemony, if the avenues of reform are shut on the people, then this would quite naturally invite reaction that may adopt wrong tactics along with the rightful means. This is why the lesson of history is that reform, progress and improvement in situation is not possible in the presence of cruelty and injustice, patronizing them and turning blind eye to the causes that divert people – individuals, groups, and nations – to violence-prone struggle. Hate and sense of dejection against America and the global imperialism are internationally established facts. Terrorism, therefore, cannot be eliminated by use of force. The British Member of Parliament George Galloway has correctly said in his speech in the Parliament that the death of one Osama bin Ladin would create one thousand more Osamas.

The real problem is the search for the causes and resolution of problems that are creating tides of rebellion and unrest in many parts of the world including America and Europe, and the oppressed people are compelled to do something even if this puts their lives in danger. The war against terrorism cannot be fought by dropping bombs, missiles and ammunition on human dwellings. This war is like the one that is fought against such perils as poverty, indigence, diseases and ignorance. So, this cannot be fought with anger and power, but with prudence and wisdom. Abandoning the way of resolving human problems and rather trying to suppress them with military might is the approach that has always failed. Nothing could be more instrumental in augmenting violence and injustice than the attempt of suppressing popular movements with the use of force.

The global imperialism fought the war for 200 years but at last had to bow to the movements of freedom, and yesterday's terrorists became today's leaders and rulers. America has had the experience of it in Vietnam, Chili, and Cambodia. Soviet Union played the same game in Afghanistan, was humiliated but if refuses to learn the lesson and is committing the same folly and

cruelty in Chechnya. After having retreated from all over the world and after 20 years of military war in the Northern Ireland, Britain had to come to terms with the same Shen Fein whose name and voice and pictures of whose leadership was banned on radio and television. Israel is playing the same game in Palestine while India is unsuccessfully trying to find a military solution of political problems in Jammu & Kashmir and 16 other regions. There is no way of finding any solution except through pondering with cool-mind over the elements and causes that disturb peace and tranquility and the factors that lead to terrorism are rid of.

### The Need of Introspection

This is what is being urged even in the West by those who know the facts of life and the message of history. The views of Robert Fisk, the well-known political commentator of daily Independent, on the recent tragedy in the backdrop of Middle-East crisis should serve as an eye-opener not only for the American leadership but all rulers throughout the world.

“So it has come to this. The entire modern history of the Middle East – the collapse of the Ottoman empire, the Balfour declaration, Lawrence of Arabia’s lies, the Arab revolt, the foundation of the state of Israel, four Arab-Israeli wars and the 34 years of Israel’s brutal occupation of Arab land – all erased within hours as those who claim to represent a crushed, humiliated population struck back with the wickedness and awesome cruelty of a doomed people. It is fair – is it moral – to write this so soon, without proof, without a shred of evidence, when the last act of barbarism in Oklahoma turned out to be the work of home-grown Americans? I fear it is. America is at war and, unless I am grotesquely mistaken, many thousands more are now scheduled to die in the Middle East, perhaps in America too. Some of us warned of "the explosion to come". But we never dreamed this nightmare. But this is not the war of democracy vs. terror that the world will be asked to believe in the coming hours and days. It is also about American missiles smashing into Palestinian homes and US helicopters firing missiles into a Lebanese ambulance in 1996 and American shells crashing into a village called Qana a few days later and about a Lebanese militia – paid and uniformed by America’s Israeli ally – hacking and raping and murdering their way through refugee camps. No, there is no doubting the utter, indescribable evil of what has happened in the United States. That Palestinians could celebrate the massacre of 20,000, perhaps 35,000 innocent people is not only a symbol of their despair but of their political immaturity, of their failure to grasp what they had always been accusing their Israeli enemies of doing: acting disproportionately. But we were warned. All the years of rhetoric, all the promises to strike at the heart of America, to cut off the head of "the American snake" we took for empty threats. How could a backward, conservative, undemocratic and corrupt group of regimes and small, violent

organizations fulfill such preposterous promises? Now we know. And in the hours that followed yesterday's annihilation, I began to remember those other extraordinary, unbelievable assaults upon the US and its allies, miniature now by comparison with yesterday's casualties. Did not the suicide bombers who killed 241 American servicemen and almost 100 french paratroops in Beirut on 23 October 1983, time their attacks with unthinkable precision? It was just 7 second between the Marine bombing and the destruction of the French three miles away. Then there were the attacks on US bases in Saudi Arabia, and last year's attempt – almost successful it now turns out – to sink the USS Cole in Aiden. And then how easy was our failure to recognize the new weapon of the Middle East which neither Americans or any other Westerners could equal: the despair-driven, desperate suicide bomber. All America's power, wealth – and arrogance, the Arabs will be saying – could not defend the greatest power the world has even known from this destruction. And there will be, naturally and inevitably, and quite immorally, an attempt to obscure the historical wrongs and the blood and injustices that lie behind yesterday's firestorms. We will be told about "mindless terrorism", the "mindless" bit being essential if we are not to realize how hatred America has become in the land of the birth of three great regions. Ask an Arab how he responds to 20 or 30 thousand innocent deaths and he or she will respond as good and decent people should, that it is an unspeakable crime. But they will ask why we did not use such words about the sanctions that have destroyed the lives of perhaps half a million children in Iraq, why we did not rage about the 17,500 civilians killed in Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, why we allowed one nation in the Middle East to ignore UN Security Council resolutions but bombed and sanctioned all others who did. And those basic reasons why the Middle East caught fire last September – the Israeli occupation of Arab land – the dispossession of Palestinians, the bombardments and state sponsored executions, the Israeli tortures...all these must be obscured lest they provide the smallest fractional reason for yesterday's mass savagery. No, Israel was not to blame – that we can be sure that Saddam Hussein and the other grotesque dictators will claim so – but the malign influence of history and our share in its burden must surely stand in the dark with the suicide bombers. Our broken promises, perhaps even our destruction of the Ottoman Empire, led inevitably to this tragedy. America has bankrolled Israel's wars for so many years that it believed this would be cost-free. No longer so. It would be an act of extraordinary courage and wisdom if the United States was to pause for a moment and reflect upon its role in the world, the indifference of its government to the suffering of Arabs, the indolence of its current president. But, of course, the United States will want to strike back against "world terror", who can blame them? Indeed, who could ever point the finger at Americans now for using that pejorative and sometimes racist word "terrorism"? There will be those swift to

condemn any suggestion that we should look for real historical reasons for an act of violence on this world-war scale. But unless we do so, then we are facing a conflict the like of which we have not seen since Hitler's death and the surrender of Japan. Korea, Vietnam, is beginning to fade away in comparison. Eight years ago, I helped to make a television series that tried to explain why so many Muslims had come to hate the West. Last night, I remembered some of those Muslims in the film, their families burnt by American-made bombs and weapons. They talked about how no one would help them but God. Theology vs. technology, the suicide bomber against the nuclear power."

Writing in the Washington Post, Prof. Robert G. Kavian too has called for introspection and stocktaking in quite clear words. His comment that weekly Guardian published (**Sept. 20-26, 2001, p. 30**) invites all for rethinking:

"But none of our political leaders has taken on the enormous questions our new status raises. The country has been content to bask in our prosperity, largely oblivious to unpleasant news from abroad, or anywhere else. Last week, painfully, we learned the limits of our unique power. It is a harsh judgment, but awfully difficult to refute. We are the leading world power, but we rarely lead the world. When we do, it is in military situations – the Gulf War, or Kosovo. What great American initiative has helped solve a global problem in recent times? We give much less, per capita, than other industrialized countries to help the world's poorest peoples. We stand apart on numerous issues that others believe deserve concerted action, from banning land mines and nuclear testing to reducing the emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Big powers must care about what they control and influence, but also about the context, the milieu, in which they operate. A hostile milieu can undermine a great power as effectively as a resourceful enemy can. Americans have had to notice that their milieu has been deteriorating. We're conscious, for example, that once-rare diseases of poverty such as tuberculosis have revived with a vengeance, even inside our country. The AIDS epidemic is another compelling sign of trouble. We're also aware of the risks the world's losers routinely take trying to smuggle themselves into one of the rich countries, in hope of becoming winners. We understand how the global drug trade has overcome all the impediments we can think of to frustrate it. Part of the new world order has been the collapse of distance, literally and figuratively. There are almost no remote places left on Earth. In the global village, the poor know how poor they are, and how much better the rich are living. The resourceful poor won't accept their status passively, but try to change it. Millions of them have pursued that goal by sneaking into the United States, just as the perpetrators of last week's

attacks did. They of course belong to a different category, the aggrieved who refuse to swallow their grievances.”

These two elaborate comments reflect the views of those in the West who are concerned over the state of affairs.

### The Need to Accept Facts

Unless American and European leadership accepts these facts, there can be no way of eliminating anarchy and destruction:

- a. Terrorism is only a symbol and symptom, situation cannot be improved unless the causes and factors that lead to it are removed
- b. Terrorism is not confined to a particular place or incidence. Injustice, wherever it is, is a threat to humanity. Innocents were killed not only in New York and Washington, but are being killed throughout the world. Any discrimination in this regard is itself a factor that contributes to terrorism.
- c. Terrorism is reprehensible in all its forms, whether it is carried out by individuals, groups, or governments.
- d. Big powers and their rulers have greater responsibility. They are not the victims of terrorism, but its perpetrators. The situation cannot be improved unless they change their attitude and policies.
- e. Violence cannot be met with violence, nor can rhetoric take the place of logic and wise action. The way of reform is both long and difficult, but there is no alternative to it.

All should be ready for reform – those who are in power and have authority and influence as well as those who are though oppressed, destitute and subjugated yet striving for achieving what is their due – but improvement in situation depends more on the role of ruling elements and big powers.

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