

Dispatches by PRAFUL BIDWAI, AHMED RASHID,
GRAHAM USHER, ANA UZELAC, ET AL.

The Nation, 9.27.01

The following six dispatches assess the impact of the World Trade Center/Pentagon attacks elsewhere in the world. The last two, from The Nation's correspondents in Britain and South Africa, are not available in our print edition.

--The Editors

INDIA: PRAFUL BIDWAI

New Delhi

As the United States puts together a broad alliance to avenge the September 11 atrocities, two major candidate-members of the coalition in the region south of Afghanistan are dangerously intensifying their mutual rivalry. Barely two months after their Agra summit, India and Pakistan have again locked horns in ways characteristic of their bitter rivalry during the cold war. Today, in an ironic twist of history, once-nonaligned India and former US ally Pakistan are clashing, although they are on the same side--with the United States.

Military action by the US-led coalition in Afghanistan threatens serious domestic trouble in India, besides plunging South Asia into new uncertainties. If President

Bush thinks the coalition offers "an opportunity to refashion the thinking between Pakistan and India" to promote reconciliation, he is likely to be proven wrong. Responses in New Delhi and Islamabad to his September 22 lifting of sanctions imposed after the 1998 nuclear tests have been divergent. Indian policy-makers see this as long expected but "asymmetrical," and as an ill-deserved reward to Pakistan for belatedly breaking with the Taliban. The Pakistanis call it inadequate. They want removal of sanctions imposed after the 1999 Musharraf coup and a further "correction" of the recent pro-India tilt in US policy.

Since September 11, India and Pakistan have been vying to become America's "frontline" partners in Afghanistan--for parochial reasons. India offered full military cooperation to the United States even before there was significant evidence on responsibility for the attacks. Indian policy-makers and -shapers could barely hide their glee at this "historic" chance for an Indian-US "strategic partnership." The United States had finally come around to understanding India's suffering under "cross-border terrorism"--that is, Pakistan's support for Kashmiri-secessionist militants--a rather facile explanation of the Kashmir crisis, which is rooted more in New Delhi's policies and popular alienation than in Pakistan's proxy war.

India's unsolicited offer of support was buttressed by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, who echoed Bush's insistence on obliterating the distinction between terrorism

and states that support it. Vajpayee demanded that "we must strike at [the terrorists'] organizations, at those who condition, finance, train, equip and protect them...and thus compel the states that nurture and support them." This brazen alignment with Washington disturbed and astonished Indian public opinion. New Delhi was so preoccupied with its self-serving stand on Kashmir that it offered to join forces with Washington without demanding the multilateral approach it is traditionally known for. India has conventionally opposed unilateral action by states or groupings like NATO and insisted that any use of military force be properly authorized by the UN's Security Council under Chapter VII of its charter. India's failure to ask for such a mandate today is largely explained by its Kashmir preoccupation and urge to isolate Pakistan.

For its part, Pakistan made a momentous choice on September 19: It will dump the Taliban and join the US-led coalition, thereby overcoming global opprobrium for supporting jihadi militants. It cashed in on its obvious locational and logistical advantage and its leverage over the Taliban. This produced resentment within New Delhi's ruling establishment. Each establishment is abusing and maligning the other, and parodying its intentions and plans. Musharraf didn't help matters when he announced the decision: Three of the four reasons he cited for it pertain directly or indirectly to India. Two of them, Kashmir and "safeguarding" nuclear weapons, have direct implications for India-Pakistan strategic hostility. Musharraf told India to "lay off" and attacked its "grand game plan" to "win over

America to its side" while harming Pakistan's vital interests.

This drew an immediate rebuke from New Delhi. India accused Musharraf of conducting "an anti-India tirade...instead of focusing on terrorism, which is responsible for the present situation," and it held Pakistan responsible for the Taliban's "birth, growth and nurturing." The mutual resentment is likely to grow as Pakistan and the United States "neutralize" and work with Afghanistan's rebel Northern Alliance, which India recognizes as that country's legitimate government and in which it has invested significantly over the years.

Rivalry with Pakistan has blinded New Delhi to the dislocations and implosions the current situation could produce if Islamicist opposition grows in Pakistan. It has been equally insensitive to the domestic need to defend pluralism and secularism as these come under increasing pressure from militant Hindu chauvinists, who see September 11 as an opportunity to malign Islam, paint all Muslims with the jihadi-terrorist brush and present them as a threat to "civilized" countries. Such elements are most strongly represented in Vajpayee's own Bharatiya Janata Party, which heads India's twenty-seven-party ruling coalition. The BJP claims to speak for 80 percent of Indians, who are Hindu, but it holds less than a quarter of the national vote. The coming confrontation in Afghanistan is likely to further disturb Hindu-Muslim relations and aggravate sectarian trends in India. It has already spurred

demands for a "tough" line on Kashmir and for draconian antiterrorism laws, which would severely curtail civil liberties.

However, there is rising opposition to this policy not just from political parties--including some within the ruling coalition--but from civil society and India's growing peace movement. This movement questions New Delhi's unconditional and uncritical support of Bush's "you're with the United States, or you're with the terrorists" line (which Indian ministers have described as "brilliant"); demands a proper UN mandate for action against the September 11 culprits; and opposes excessive use of force and "collateral damage" (highly likely in Afghanistan's conditions). India has witnessed small but spirited demonstrations against any unilateral US (or coalition) action. And there is a vigorous public debate over the wisdom of using force, as well as over the US record of military intervention in the Third World, including Iraq.

Above all, there is serious concern about the nuclear dimension of any instability that the imminent confrontation might produce in South Asia--with grim global consequences. The United States, ironically, will have contributed in no small measure to this through its own addiction to nuclear weapons, coupled with its flawed nonproliferation, as distinct from disarmament-based, approach to arms control.

Praful Bidwai is a South Asian peace activist, a columnist

with twenty-five Indian newspapers and co-author (with Achin Vanaik) of *New Nukes* (Interlink). He shared the International Peace Bureau's Sean MacBride International Peace Prize for 2000 with Vanaik.

PAKISTAN: AHMED RASHID

Lahore

resident Pervez Musharraf is walking a knife edge at home as he tries to keep a deeply polarized country from tearing itself apart, now that his military regime has pledged full support to the United States in its war against terrorism.

The first test for the regime came on September 21, when thirty-five religious parties called for a nationwide strike and demonstrations after Friday prayers to oppose the government's decision to join the US-led alliance. However, the demonstrations were small by Pakistani standards and largely involved mullahs and teenagers from the thousands of madrassahs, or religious schools, from which the Taliban draw many of their recruits. Most people stayed at home. Although the low turnout made it clear that the vast majority of the population is presently unwilling to support the Islamic parties' antigovernment campaign, the mood could change once US forces are based in Pakistan and military action begins.

Polls vary widely on the question of how much opposition

there is to the government's decision to go along with the Americans; the most reliable estimates put it at around 25 percent. Musharraf has appealed to people not to react emotionally, but to put Pakistan's interests first. He said that Islamabad could not afford to be alienated from the international community by trying to defend the Taliban. He has also bluntly told the nation that if Pakistan had not committed bases and other facilities to US troops, India would have done so, which would have posed a severe threat to Pakistan's nuclear program and stance on the disputed territory of Kashmir.

Musharraf's problem is that he is head of a military rather than a political regime, and he has made little attempt to broaden the political base of his government or win over the silent majority, who support his stance. His political skills are severely limited. He has appeared only once on national TV since the September 11 attacks, has given no interviews and has remained largely closeted with his generals. "Pakistan's Islamic groups thrive when the only measure of public support is demonstrations in the streets, and their importance diminishes at times of elections," says Hussain Haqqani, a political analyst and former adviser to Prime Ministers Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto.

"Musharraf is probably now regretting that he marginalized the mainstream political parties, leaving the Islamists as the only show on the streets," Haqqani added. "Now he has to demonstrate some political skills and limit the Islamists' capacity for violence."

The real threat to instability and Musharraf is the economy. Pakistan was in its fourth year of severe recession when the terrorists struck. Foreign investment in the recently ended fiscal year (July 2000-June 2001) was the worst in a decade, and GDP growth was only 2.6 percent, compared with last year's 4.8 percent. The crisis has led to a further crash in business and economic confidence. Pakistan's three stock exchanges were shut down after suffering massive losses in the three days following the attacks in the United States. Now the Bush Administration has announced that it is waiving sanctions and putting together an aid package, which means Washington has recognized the crisis.

Economists say Pakistan is asking for an immediate debt forgiveness of several billion of its \$38 billion total foreign debt, resumption of US military aid and quick disbursement of loans from the United States and the World Bank to restore business confidence. On September 21 Japan announced a \$40 million emergency loan, and the United States and the European Union are expected to follow. If Pakistan can garner international economic aid, Musharraf can point out the benefits of allying himself with the West.

American military operations against bin Laden and the Taliban are expected to be largely covert. Forces have already been sent to several Arab Gulf regimes and, according to Central Asian diplomats and wire reports, to Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as well, where authoritarian and highly controlled regimes can keep the US presence secret and completely out of the public eye. In Pakistan, which is

expected to host the largest US military force because of its proximity to Afghanistan, such a feat will not be possible. That's when the Musharraf regime's alliance with the United States will be truly tested.

Ahmed Rashid is the author of *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (Yale).

MIDDLE EAST

GRAHAM USHER

Jerusalem

In Israel and the occupied territories, the attacks in the United States have produced an eerie sense of déjà vu. In Israel, hospitals are on high alert and people are stocking up on gas masks, a precaution fueled by news stories--some of them Israeli-inspired--that Iraq too is on America's hit list and so Israeli cities may again be targeted by Saddam Hussein's Scud missiles.

In the 1991 Gulf War, Palestinians were placed under a six-week curfew. Today their 700 towns, villages and refugee camps are blockaded by earth ramparts and army checkpoints that are manned, occasionally, by tanks. Back then, they danced on the roofs when missiles rained on Tel Aviv. Now they are trying to live down media images of a handful of their people celebrating the carnage in America.

What links the two wars and two peoples is pessimism. After a year of the latest, bloodiest and most desperate conflict, all expect that things can only be worse this time around. And both nations have already tasted the future: Palestinians via a ferocious Israeli assault on their communities; Israelis via unusually tough arm-twisting by their chief ally, the United States. In the week after two airliners plowed into the World Trade Center, the Israeli army killed twenty-eight Palestinians (most of them civilians) and invaded Jenin and Jericho, two West Bank cities under the full control of the Palestinian Authority. Israeli leader Ariel Sharon apparently assumed the world would buy his comparison that Yasir Arafat is "our bin Laden" and grant license to bring him to heel. It wasn't granted. Under European and US pressure--and criticism from Sharon's increasingly dissident Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres--the offensive was curbed, aided by Palestinian moves that for once wrested the initiative out of Israel's hands.

Convinced that Israel would use the attacks on America to destroy his authority--personal and institutional--Arafat urged a campaign replacing the stereotype of gleeful Palestinians with images of Palestinians praying, lighting candles and donating blood. He also ordered a cease-fire "on all fronts," expressing his people's "readiness to be part of the international alliance for ending terrorism against unarmed innocent civilians." Palestinians, mostly, endorsed the call. Washington nodded to Israel to reciprocate. With

extreme reluctance, Sharon did so. On September 18 he authorized his army to cease all "initiated actions"(incursions and assassinations) in the Palestinian areas and withdraw tanks from Jericho and Jenin. His only rider was that there be "forty-eight hours of quiet" in the occupied territories prior to any meeting between Peres and Arafat.

But this was a condition that could not be met--at least in the armed garrison that is the West Bank and Gaza. On September 26--again due to US prodding--Sharon allowed Peres to meet with Arafat in Gaza, where they announced a cease-fire, despite a bomb blast at an Israeli army base and a clash erupting at a Palestinian refugee camp a mere three miles from where the meeting was held. These two interruptions of "quiet" left a Palestinian teenager dead and a dozen wounded, including three Israeli soldiers.

Palestinians--including the Islamist movements of Hamas and Islamic Jihad--have broadly accepted Arafat's cease-fire as meaning an end to attacks on civilians inside Israel and firing on Jewish settlements from PA areas. But they will not give up armed resistance against soldiers and settlers in those areas in the West Bank and Gaza where Palestinians live under direct Israeli occupation. "The cease-fire is not an order. We are not an army and this is not a classical war. It is a process. What the Palestinians are saying is the more Israel lifts the restrictions on our lives the more the cease-fire can take hold," says Palestinian analyst Ghassan Khatib."What Arafat is signaling is he is

ready to trade the intifada for anew political process with greater US involvement," he adds. After an uprising that has cost them much and brought them little, many Palestinians would accept the trade, even if certain of their factions would not. But the transaction doesn't depend on them only.

It also depends on whether, in exchange for "a cessation of hostilities," real international pressure will be brought to bear on Israel to first lift the siege and then end the longest military occupation in recent history. The Palestinian fear is that the United States is only pressing for a cease-fire now so that the "coalition against terror" can include Muslim and Arab states without snagging on "local disputes" like Israel versus Palestine, and that the occupied territories will remain unlit by hope.

If that fear is confirmed, one thing is certain. Whatever comes from America's imminent strike on the Taliban and Osama bin Laden, the fallout will not be confined to Afghanistan. The hatred for all things American will reverberate much wider than that.

Graham Usher is The Economist's Palestine correspondent.

RUSSIA: ANA UZELAC

Moscow

It was an obvious thing to do in London, Paris or Amsterdam. But for the vast majority of Muscovites, laying flowers along the walls of the US Embassy, fastening the Stars and Stripes to its fence and weeping in grief for Russia's former cold war enemy was something they could hardly have imagined doing before September 11. And yet, the enormity of the tragedy that hit New York and Washington seems to have dwarfed the differences that have strained relations between the two countries for the past couple of years.

In the hours after the attack, Russia emerged as the first country to offer its sympathy and a promise to fight terrorism shoulder to shoulder with the United States. Two weeks later, Russian President Vladimir Putin presented a concrete list of how the Kremlin will help the US-led international coalition if it targets Afghanistan. The list includes sharing intelligence, opening air corridors for aid shipments, supplying the Afghan opposition with weapons and participating in search-and-rescue operations there. But possibly most important was Putin's decision not to prevent the former Soviet republics of Central Asia from giving the United States the right to use their airports--a move that could make the crucial difference in the looming war.

Putin seems to be the very embodiment of Russian public opinion, which--just two years after the US Embassy was pelted with eggs because of the NATO airstrikes in

Yugoslavia--is ready to grant the United States the right to conduct some kind of military operation. A poll conducted by the All-Russian Center for Public Opinion Research (VTsIOM) just days after the attack shows that 32 percent of Muscovites would "understand" if the United States attacked terrorists' training camps, and 29 percent would even "approve." The number of people who would "disapprove" of such action is 26 percent. Still, this is no carte blanche. Sixty-eight percent would condemn attacks on countries that harbor terrorists; only 5 percent would approve them. And 72 percent would like America to make sure it knows who is responsible for the attacks and only then take action.

But Russia's engagement is not a risk-free venture, and there are voices calling for caution. "Russia should participate in the American actions proceeding exclusively from its national interest," said Mikhail Leontyev, an influential TV anchor on the public channel ORT, summing up the prevailing political climate. As long as the Taliban are the target, interests will coincide. The movement was proclaimed one of Russia's biggest security threats last year, and the Kremlin said it was already providing Washington with intelligence on them. Veterans of the Soviet Union's decade-long Afghan war have valuable firsthand knowledge of the terrain and the people; many have already warned the United States that it is heading for a protracted and bloody conflict. The Kremlin has also been gathering intelligence on radical Islamic groups operating in Central Asia, and it maintains links with the anti-Taliban

opposition in Afghanistan.

But the focus of Russia's worries is Central Asia, the place where the new US partnership will be most seriously tested. The most fragile of all countries there are Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, which emerged from Soviet rule as corrupt secular autocracies with strong ties to Moscow. Both border Afghanistan and both have experienced Islamic insurgencies in recent years. Both countries are ideally placed to serve as bases for clandestine US operations into Afghanistan. Pakistan's former Foreign Secretary Niaz Naik recently told the BBC that plans for such actions existed even before September 11. But there are voices warning that a US military presence in Central Asia could trigger new uprisings and destabilize the region. Igor Rotar, a Central Asia expert writing for the daily Nezavisimaya Gazeta, warned that these impoverished countries are already "too tempting a prey for the champions of the new jihad." But it's a risk they seem increasingly ready to take, as one Central Asian nation after another offers help to the United States--from Turkmenistan's readiness to open air space to Kazakhstan's offer of the use of its military bases.

Putin's political will and the potential benefits of ridding the region of the Taliban have managed to overcome the Russian military's fears that a US presence could end the days of unquestioned Russian dominance in Central Asia. But the Kremlin's long deliberations fueled speculation that it was seeking possible trade-offs for its willingness to cooperate--suspension or slowing down of NATO's

eastward expansion, easing Russia's access to the World Trade Organization and extending large-scale debt relief.

Independently of this, Russia is already enjoying the first benefits of the new political climate: Despite the White House's assurances that the human rights situation in Chechnya will not slip off its radar, there is little chance that Washington will now criticize the Kremlin's brutal ways of fighting the insurgency there. Moscow has branded the rebels "terrorists" and accused them of links to Osama bin Laden. This is now more than enough to muffle the already ignored complaints of Chechnya's battered civilians. Taking this opportunity, Putin offered Chechen rebels seventy-two hours to sever their links with "international terrorists," approach his representatives in the region and start negotiating the technicalities of their surrender. He didn't say what would happen after the deadline had passed. He didn't really need to.

The September 11 attacks may have given the Kremlin more grounds to argue against US plans for a national missile defense system. "The shield would never have protected the United States from this attack," said Dmitry Rogozin, head of the Russian parliamentary committee on foreign affairs, the very next day. "The whole idea should be reconsidered." At least the Kremlin has been given more time to think about how to continue negotiating once the talks on NMD resume. Earlier, Washington warned that if the deal was not reached by November, it would unilaterally abrogate the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Now

it looks as if it will have other things on its mind.

Ana Uzelac is a Moscow-based journalist who writes for the Moscow Times and other English- and Polish-language publications.

SOUTH AFRICA: MARK GEVISSER

Johannesburg

akhaola Ndebele, a 30-year-old writer on an AIDS educational TV drama, says his first response to the attacks in the United States was disbelief. But then, he says, "this turned to excitement at the enormity of the event. 'America's being hit!' Later, when I saw how many lives were lost, reality set in, but my excitement was, 'It's finally happening to them, whereas they thought they were invincible.'" Ndebele says almost everyone he knows feels that "America got its comeuppance."

Ndebele is not alone. Although the South African government's official line is one of unconditional support for the United States, just after the bombing a provincial premier, Makhenkhesi Stofile, said US citizens "had to look into themselves" to find out why the attack happened, and even questioned the use of the word "terrorist" to describe the hijackers.

According to Zweli Silangwe, 25, when he and other students in an international relations class at the University of the Witwatersrand discussed whether the United States should attack Afghanistan, the vast majority of the whites in the class supported such retaliation, while the vast majority of blacks opposed it. This echoes a survey of 500 South Africans, in which 52 percent of the whites polled felt that South Africa should participate in the United States' declared war against terrorism, as opposed to only 30 percent of the blacks. But John Kuhn, 23, the deputy-president of the Wits Students' Representative Council, says he has noticed--even among those who are deeply upset about the attacks--"a deep-seated anti-Americanism among almost all students here, whatever their color or background."

The perception is that young postapartheid South Africans are politically apathetic. South African university-goers are major consumers of US popular culture and commodities, and they have identities that are often more global than national. Where, then, does the anti-Americanism come from?

In students, at least, it stems in part from the anti-privatization campaigns that have racked South African universities over the past two years, bringing the issue of globalization, and the role that the United States plays in the global economy, onto campus. Among black students it is also an identification with the Palestinians, and with the struggle for freedom against an imperial power, as well as

perceived indifference by the West to African genocides such as in Rwanda. The US withdrawal from the UN's recent World Conference Against Racism in Durban was severely criticized at the time; now the attack and its consequences are being read through the politics of race. Says Silangwe, who is the branch chairman of the SA Students Congress, which is aligned with the African National Congress, "Most white South Africans are still not comfortable with a government ruled by black people--and this makes them aggressive in their approach. The United States is perceived as a white state, something they identify with, and they need to support it against attacks by 'black' people. On the other hand, most blacks respond that anything coming from the United States is racist--and so they oppose it."

Perhaps ironically, television appears to be most to blame for the groundswell of antipathy toward the United States at a time when, one might imagine, it should expect the most sympathy. The result of America's dominance of global media means that the tragedy and its aftermath are being broadcast into our homes as if we were Americans ourselves: We are called upon not just to grieve and mourn, but to summon up anger and outrage as if we were personally attacked. And we hear, incessantly, one dominant voice: the baying for blood. If South Africans--and other people of the South--thought the United States was arrogant before, this was only confirmed in the aftermath of the attacks. "We have been wronged," the message went, "so the whole world must go to war." The

distasteful consequence is, among many South Africans, a lack of empathy for a deeply wounded nation, an admiration for unjustifiable terror tactics and a limited understanding of the attack's global consequences.

Watching television with friends on the night of the attacks, Makhaola Ndebele says, one of them made the analogy between US officials' calls for heightened security and the way crime-obsessed middle-class South Africans barricade themselves behind high walls and electric fences. "But more security won't help," Ndebele's friend said. "You still have the hungry world outside the big house." The point being, of course, that if you want to stop violence--be it crime or world terror--you must change the global inequities that cause it in the first place.

Mark Gevisser is The Nation's Southern Africa correspondent.

ENGLAND: MARIA MARGARONIS

London

t times since September 11, Manhattan has seemed almost as closely moored to London as it is to the United States. The world's financial capitals are linked by the community of traders who zapped irreverent jokes across the globe within minutes of previous disasters; by culture; by

friendships; by shopping. Every day the papers carry more photographs of Britons lost in the attacks, more literary accounts of the terror by novelists on both sides of the ocean. In the first hours after the planes hit, when grown-ups longed for a father figure to help contain their horror, Prime Minister Tony Blair stepped gravely out of his front door to play the part so badly muffed by Bush. Across Europe, governments have fallen in line with varying degrees of hesitation. Polls claim that 79 percent of people in Britain support a military response, 73 percent in France, 66 percent in Italy, 53 percent in pacifist Germany. But the "shoulder to shoulder" alliance promised by America's keenest ambassador--amid many reminders to his own people that the United States has so far acted with restraint--is already showing signs of stress. Fear of terrorism is now inextricable from fear of what the United States may set in motion if it rages blindly across the Middle East. Europeans have little stomach for a "crusade." If the Rumsfeld axis wins out in Washington, Blair's effort to bestride the Atlantic will become a dodgy tightrope walk.

Meanwhile, the war at home is well advanced. In spite of the government's care to distinguish terrorists from Muslims, the old reflexes of British racism are enjoying a minor renaissance. A cartoon in last week's Daily Mail showed turbaned figures demonstrating for "Death to America and Britain" at the foot of Big Ben; the caption read "Parasite: (Chambers English Dictionary) A creature which obtains food and physical protection from a host which never benefits from its presence." Tabloids point

fingers at the "enemy within"--the handful of Muslim clerics in Britain who buy into Al Qaeda's spurious notion of jihad. The effects are pervasive and insidious: A Muslim mother at my daughter's school tells me that people are shutting her out of conversations about what happened; that strangers give her dirty looks on the street. A Pakistani community leader in North London feels compelled to reiterate his condemnation of the terrorist attacks at several points in his thoughtful discussion of the historical reasons why many in Pakistan resent the United States, as if his religion and his political views might put his humanity in doubt. As in America, there have been physical assaults on individuals and mosques, and not only in areas where racial tensions previously ran high.

Before September 11 the big story here was British attempts to make the French close Sangatte, a Red Cross shelter for refugees near the mouth of the Channel Tunnel that some have used as a base for illegal entry to Britain. A tabloid reporter sounding out Sangatte residents' opinions of the atrocities in America (almost entirely negative) could not resist the portentous purple phrase: "As the Western world embarks on its frantic search for the dreaded 'sleepers' of Islamic fanaticism, here at Sangatte is a place where the sleeper may slumber undisturbed." So far the war on terrorism has been a gift to those who would close Britain's doors to asylum seekers--the plurality of whom currently come from Afghanistan. Some of the antiterrorist legislation now being considered by government ministers--though Parliament is not in session and has not

been recalled except for a day of mourning and condemnation--would in practice have as its primary function the control of illegal immigration. (Legal channels into Britain for asylum seekers are almost nonexistent.) Through measures like e-mail monitoring and the introduction of identity cards, it would also curtail civil rights and facilitate the containment of dissent. At the moment, most people seem willing to give up rights in return for the illusion of safety, though perhaps not, as military historian John Keegan put it with odd relish on BBC radio, to live "in World War II for ever and ever." The British know that governments rarely restore lost liberties: The "temporary" Prevention of Terrorism Act of 1974 is still on the books, enhanced by periodic extensions, though it has failed to prevent Al Qaeda operatives from basing themselves in Britain.

The editors of the conservative Daily Telegraph amuse themselves by publishing the names of "useful idiots"--that is, anyone who dares to criticize the United States or question the wisdom of going to war. For the European left, the situation is more challenging. No one would shed a tear for the Taliban; pretty much everyone agrees that Al Qaeda should be disarmed and those leaders who can be found brought to justice. But the United States has no credibility as judge or honest policeman, and Bush's loud declarations of war promise more suffering and instability in an already devastated region. At the same time, the trusty framework of vulgar anti-Americanism has been (or should have been) badly dented. One did not have to be a warden of

"emotional correctness" to wince at the New Statesman's sermon on September 17: "American bond traders, you may say, are as innocent and as undeserving of terror as Vietnamese or Iraqi peasants. Well, yes and no." Reviewing the United States' dismal record across the Middle East is necessary but not sufficient in this case: Religious fundamentalists from Osama bin Laden to Jerry Falwell also loathe America because they see it as brashly secular and multicultural, and they are not interested in reason or proportion. The snowball of hatred that took decades to grow will not be melted overnight, even by radical changes in US foreign policy. The fledgling European antiwar movement has so far brought 5,000 onto the streets in London, 10,000 in Rome, 1,000 in Brussels and several thousand across Germany. Like everybody else, it is struggling to take the measure of what changed on September 11. To influence the future, it will have to acknowledge the present danger while making a passionate case for long-term security based on global equity and justice. In the meantime, Europe waits to see what Washington will do.