

**SEPTEMBER 11, 2001: FRAMING THE ATTACKS IN AMERICA'S PRESS**

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## **DECLARATION**

**I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this assignment is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.**

## **ABSTRACT**

The attacks on New York and Washington on September 11 2001 constituted a singular media event. On the front pages of America's newspapers and in its pre-eminent news magazines unfolded, in the immediate wake of the blitz, a portrayal that uncontroversially legitimised claims to American innocence, fomented moral certitude through parallels with previous wars and anticipated retaliation that would soon enough engulf Afghanistan.

Showing, first, that accounts of reality are always social constructions, the "framing" of September 11 in America's press will be evaluated with reference to 122 newspaper front pages, most from September 12, some from the day of the attacks, and two American news magazines. The emergence of a discourse of war will be considered, as well as the perpetuation within and without of the press of dominant views on America's role in the conflict. The extent to which this "popular frame" selectively excluded inconvenient truths is illustrated in critiques of John Pilger and Noam Chomsky, and an assessment of the politics of defining "terror".

The analysis is placed within the normative framework of orthodox journalism ethics, particularly the values of impartiality and objectivity, concluding that, in democracy, a responsible media better serves the public interest through sustained criticism than compliant patriotism.



## ABSTRAK

Die aanvalle op New York en Washington op 11 September 2001 was 'n uitsonderlike media-gebeurtenis. Direk daarna het 'n uitbeelding op die voorblaaie van Amerika se koerante en in twee voorste nuustydskrifte ontvou wat aansprake op Amerikaanse onskuld sonder omhaal sou legitimeer, parallelle met vorige oorloë in die diens van morele daadkragtigheid sou oproep, en wraakaanvalle sou antisipeer wat kort daarna in Afghanistan sou woed.

Met as vertrekpunt die argument dat enige weergawe van realiteit 'n sosiale konstruksie is, word die uitbeelding ("framing") van die aanvalle in die Amerikaanse pers op 122 koerantvoorblaaie, hoofsaaklik van 12 September maar insluitend enkeles van die aanvalsdag self, en in twee Amerikaanse nuustydskrifte hier geevalueer. Die ontluiking van 'n oorlogsdiskoers word bekyk, asook die voortsetting binne en buite die media van heersende sienings oor Amerika se rol in die konflik. Die mate waarin hierdie "populêre omraming" ("framing") ongemaklike waarhede selektief uitgesluit het, word aangetoon in critiques van John Pilger en Noam Chomsky, en 'n oorweging van die politiek agter 'n definisie van "terreur".

Die analise voltrek in die normatiewe raamwerk van joernalistieke etiek, veral die waardes van onpartydigheid en objektiviteit, en kom tot die gevolgtrekking dat, in demokrasie, 'n verantwoordelike media die openbare belang beter dien deur volgehou kritiek as deur onderdanige patriotisme.



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## INTRODUCTION

On the morning of 11 September 2001 the unthinkable happened. In a nightmare of devastation terrorists hijacked four aeroplanes, destroyed the towers of the World Trade Centre in New York, marred the American defence headquarters in Washington, D.C. and crashed in rural Pennsylvania. Thousands were feared dead. This was an act of war; a new day of infamy. Freedom itself came under attack in the “apparent terrorist attacks” said US President George W. Bush. “Our nation saw evil” (*Newsweek Extra Edition*, 2001: 30). But America would not falter, he vowed. The Federal Bureau of Investigation soon gathered more than 700 leads and within fewer than four weeks America was indeed at war in Afghanistan, aiming to “smoke out the folks who committed this act”, among them the chief suspect harboured by the Afghan Taliban government, Osama bin Laden.

In the above words the American press framed an event that caught the world’s attention. Although millions of pairs of eyes on September 11 were transfixed on television screens beaming live broadcasts of the second attack on New York minutes after the first at 8.45 ECT, the world’s press began preparations to tell the story to millions of readers who, by the next day, would doubtless already know the attacks had taken place, but, nevertheless, would want to know more. Although hardly heralding the first news, the newspapers of the next morning (and some extra editions of September 11) offered readers the first tangible documentation of unusual episodes that dominated public debate for months and purported to justify a war in Afghanistan.

These newspapers played a vital role in assigning definitions to a phenomenon that was alien to Americans, putting a “context round experience” (Morris in Eldridge, 1993: 4), inadvertently suggesting appropriate interpretations of facts and establishing a discourse within which reactions to the disaster could be properly constructed. The media had to decide how to portray the tragedy responsibly, guide a nation toward acceptance of the past but also a thoughtful approach to what might lie ahead.

Orthodox media ethics dictate that responsible media seek to report truth as fully as possible, minimise harm and remain independent so that they may stay unremittingly loyal to the truth instead of some partisan ideal (Black, Steele and Barney, 1995: 2-3, see chapter 3). Faced with a disaster such as that of September 11 that claimed thousands of lives during a *Pax Americana* if not a *Pax Universalis* (Lloyd, 2001), most people, including journalists, found it difficult not to deplore what had happened. A surge in patriotism invited American flags into newsrooms and enabled critics of America’s war effort to be uncontroversially dismissed (chapter 2).

What are the duties of the journalist? Do orthodox values such as impartiality and objectivity hold sway in the face of evidently hostile acts, especially if the public, as opinion polls suggested (see 1.5.1.),



valued a war in Afghanistan higher than a free press? Did the media hide propaganda within acceptable news genres (Clark, 2001), thus placating the gatekeepers of American democracy?

With reference to selected newspaper front pages of 12 September and the influential newsmagazines *Time* and *Newsweek*, this assignment will examine the American print media's immediate response to September 11. For reasons stated, that response was significant in its "framing" of the attacks, as subsequent events would be likely to be interpreted within the framework fixed and eventual reactions steered by the alternatives suggested by the media.

It is contended that, just as in previous wars,<sup>1</sup> the media were not only the victims of censorship in America and abroad, but also often complicit in appeasing those in power in its calls for a patriotic press and uncritical support for a war in Afghanistan. The merit of "truthful propaganda" in the media will be considered. It is also contended that the press often espoused a simplistic discourse of war that did not best serve the public interest. Arguing in favour of a free press in democracies, it will be shown that orthodox journalistic values such as impartiality and "objectivity" should not easily be sacrificed in the interest of "national security" or the "public interest" as defined by the powerful.

It is contended that the discourse the media choose to fashion in times of "war" has a profound impact on the way citizens in a democracy think about war, the justifiability of conflict and the point at which the publicised suffering even of the enemy becomes too much to bear, as was suggested by adverse responses of British audiences in the Gulf War to seeing dead bodies on television screens.<sup>2</sup> After weighing the media's response against these considerations, and reconsidering the appropriate interpretation of a value like impartiality in the light of the findings made, the aptness of a more involved, less "objective" journalism of attachment will be considered. Should the media try to remain independent in times of war? Is truth still the most important value?

What follows will risk an answer.

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<sup>1</sup> War is often fought in a "fog of falsehood", as Susan Carruthers shows (2000: 5-9). "Governments, mindful of their own popularity, generally seek to harness mass media in wartime to persuade citizens of a war's justness and the enemy's implacability." This "fog", however, seems to serve a justified purpose in the eyes of the "war citizenry". In the Falklands-Malvinas war of 1982, 34% of British audiences said they approved the principle of government issuing false information to the media if it would help win the war, and 21% condoned the media in so doing (2000: 154). Censorship was also rife in the Gulf War, but public support for policies such as limiting journalists to reporting "pools" to ensure tight control over news flow, suggested audiences were "prepared to suspend their right to know, provided they believe the war to be just and the anticipated gains worth the price of the deaths of a number of professional soldiers" (Carruthers, 2000: 155).

<sup>2</sup> Only 8% of Britons said in a survey they thought it acceptable to see close-up pictures of British dead in the Gulf (in Belsey, 1992: 160) and the *Daily Telegraph* argued against the publication of pictures showing the toll of a "massacre" by Allied forces at the Al-Ameriya bunker in Baghdad where 400 Iraqi civilians had died, as it would "further the agenda of Saddam" and "weaken morale".



## 1. FRAMING SEPTEMBER 11

Who was to blame? Who was the scoundrel? Who were the victims? Who started first?

Thus the real battle after the attacks in America on 11 September 2001 was joined. A battle, argued the Israeli columnist Doron Rosenblum (2001) in the *Ha'aretz* daily, over the narrative, waged strikingly on the pages of newspapers. This battle was troubling, wrote Rosenblum. After the attacks, it was clear who the aggressor was. But that realisation grew "vague", casting cause and effect into an "inseparable melange". Some portrayed the response to terrorism itself as an act of terror, even conceived as the reason for the attacks, "as proof that the hatred of the terrorists was justified from the outset, and, therefore, also understandable."

Rosenblum bemoaned a post-modernism in which "everything is chaotic ... and relative." But she proved a point – by admitting to the battle over the narrative, one acknowledges that there are multiple ways to portray the same event and, as Rosenblum portends, each portrayal has consequences. Acknowledging, further, that not all story-tellers amass equal influence and authority, the ability to establish discourse, the framework of meaning and interpretation within which events are understood, depends largely on the power of the story-teller. In an open society with multiple voices, this power often rests with the media, a heterogeneous, amorphous body of interpreters who act as society's "privileged story-tellers", as David Campbell argues in his study on terrorism and the media (1993: 7).

In this chapter, I will show why the media's primary task, that of the transmission of information, can never be completely value-free. From analyses of newspaper front pages on September 12 and coverage in America's two biggest newsmagazines published shortly thereafter, a dominant discourse emerged in which America and its adversaries were depicted in a certain way, often belying the inclination of the "story-teller". This discourse sustains a bipolar world in which an innocent, freedom-loving America, its people caring for one another in a troubled time, is juxtaposed to a foreign hatred of and opposition to America, "not for what it does, but for what it is" (Zakaria, 2001). Goodness is juxtaposed to evil, the "land of the free"<sup>3</sup> to an austere menace antagonistic to America. The significance of references in the press to war and past conflicts will also be quantified and considered. The purpose is to show how the press framed the attacks in America and that framing itself is inevitable.

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<sup>3</sup> In a speech to the American Congress on September 20, 2001 Bush elaborated on the reasons for the attacks, re-igniting the belief that American values represent the ideal and would only be opposed by those who oppose democracy itself: "Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated. Americans are asking, why do they hate us? They hate what we see right here in this chamber – a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms -- our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other..." (Bush, 2001b).



## 1.1. Constructing reality

It has been suggested that the media should reflect society in the same way a mirror reflects, showing objects as they are, without, in the showing, changing them. The integrity of this model depends on the theoretical possibility of depicting anything *precisely*, showing without selecting; reflecting without distorting on news pages. This, indeed, is a widely recognised goal in journalism. Among the media institutions that explicitly vow to strive towards such reflection is America's Society of Professional Journalists. In the interest of "accuracy and objectivity" the Society bids members in its code of ethics to report the "facts", find "truth" and be "objective" (Black et al., 1995: 6-7).

But changing insights in the media and language suggest that the mirror analogy is flawed. The mere analysis in this assignment of news in terms of "framing", "narrative" or "discourse" appreciates that an unaffected reflection is impossible. There are seemingly simple ways of showing this. Veteran television journalist Martin Bell has stated that "a mirror does not affect what it reflects, the television image does" (cited in Kieran, 1998: 18). For example, the presence of television cameras during the Serb siege of Sarajevo in 1992 turned an apparent military victory into a political defeat for Slobodan Milosevic by showing cruelty to civilians.

The mirror analogy, however, also falters at close examination of the nature of language and the omnipresence of discourse, suggesting that ideology influences media representation, thus substituting the mirror with the notion of a construction of reality through language in the news. Based on the premise that news is a representation of the world in language, Robert Fowler (1991: 4) employs the theory of the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure to show that language is a semiotic code that imposes a "structure of values, social and economic in origin, on whatever is represented". Inevitably, it follows, news also constructively patterns that of which it speaks. "News is a representation in this sense of construction; it is not a value-free reflection of 'facts'." The constructed nature of the "reality" in news is also apparent from the "complex and artificial set of criteria for selection" that determines what is defined as news in the first place, Fowler contends (1991: 2).

This view resonates favourably with prevalent orthodoxy about the role of the observer. The consumer of news – call her an observer of "mediated reality" – has not the same relationship to "reality" as the journalist, for she cannot overcome the first level of representation and interpretation that constitutes the journalist's observation. Even the seemingly unmediated observations of the journalist are situated in frameworks of news values. "A report," writes Walter Lippmann, "is the joint product of the knower and the known, in which the role of observer is always selective and usually creative. The facts we see depend on where we are placed, and on the habits of our eyes" (cited in Cohen, 1992: 161).



After selection, news undergoes a further transformation in the way it is presented in the news medium. Is it afforded prominence by publication on the front page? Does a photograph that entices accompany it, or one that offends? These decisions are guided by ideas and beliefs about the merit of the myriad possible messages that news could transmit, and infuse the mirror's reflection with value and ideology. They also often hide the provisional nature of accounts of reality, leaving media consumers unaware that the epistemological status of news often varies (Eldridge, 1993: 6).

In examining "ideology" in the news, Croteau and Hoynes posit in *Media/Society* that the media cannot but be purveyors of underlying messages and images about society (1999: 157). In an exhaustive examination of portrayals of society and power relations within society in the media, the authors propose that media texts are "sites where cultural contests over meaning are waged" by serving as a forum for a struggle between different ideological perspectives, each representing different interests with "unequal power". "[L]arge numbers of the public ... perceive the media as purveyors of ideology – even if they don't use the term. Media sell both products and ideas, both personalities and worldviews; the notion that mass media products and cultural values are fundamentally intertwined has gained broad public acceptance" (1999: 159).

Croteau and Hoynes recognise that "ideas and attitudes that are routinely included in media become part of the legitimate public debate about issues. Ideas that are excluded from the popular media ... have little legitimacy. They are outside the range of acceptable ideas. The ideological influence of media can be seen in the absences and exclusions just as much as in the content of the messages" (1999: 161). The formation and exclusion of content, to which I refer in this assignment as "framing", is influenced by a "hegemony" in culture, power and ideology, subtly dictating the "assumptions we make about social life and on the terrain of things that we accept as 'natural'." Thus, the powerful determine through cultural leadership what we regard as "common sense", take for granted and therefore place in a realm that is uncontested, with neither a need nor room for questioning assumptions (1999: 164). The media become "places where certain ideas are circulated as the truth, effectively marginalising or dismissing competing truth claims" (1999: 166).

By casting the September 11 attacks uncontroversially as a declaration of war, for example (see 1.4.2.), alternative understandings of the acts and America's possible responses are stifled. In the formation of an "uncontested realm", rules of discourse are not admitted to but ever present. They remain, said the late modern French philosopher Michel Foucault, "unvoiced, unthought," and so safe from public scrutiny (in Young, 1981: 48). These rules and categories are "assumed, a priori, as a constituent part of discourse and therefore of knowledge," says Foucault. They manifest in "discursive practices" that include the "definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories". And these rules make it "virtually impossi-



ble” to think outside of them and so delineate a range of “acceptable” and “unacceptable” ideas.<sup>4</sup> To think outside of the “possible” would “by definition ... be mad ... beyond comprehension and therefore reason. It is in this way that ... discursive rules are linked to the exercise of power”. Foucault<sup>5</sup> suggests that the “founding subject is given the task of directly animating the empty forms of language with his aims...” (Young, 1981: 65).

### 1.1.1. Who framed 9-11?

Asking not if, but *how* the media “framed” the attacks on September 11, suggests that the American media told the story from a particular view of the world and America’s role in it. A fair amount of “fact” about September 11 is common cause and “objectively” true: four planes *were* hijacked that morning, *did* crash into buildings and a field off Pittsburgh and caused deaths and a chaos in the streets of News York and Washington. But “framing” becomes pertinent when the attackers are either described as “Bastards!” as the *San Francisco Examiner* did (11 September 2001, 2001: 12), or as “desperate zealots” and a “ragtag bunch of disorganised thugs”,<sup>6</sup> in *Newsweek (Extra Edition, 2001: 26, 47)*. “Framing” constitutes the choice between talk of the World Trade Centre as buildings destroyed in an aerial assault or as “cathedrals maimed” in an “empire” that had “lost its innocence,” in *Time* magazine (*Special Edition, 2001*). “Framing” emerges from portrayals of the attacks as “An evil Act” in the *Ottawa Citizen* or as an “act of war” in several other US newspapers. And each framing decision has consequences for public interpretations of the attacks and the responses a government regards as politically viable amid public opinion shaped principally by the media.

Saying, as in *Time* magazine, that the WTC towers were “planted” at the base of Manhattan, lends these lifeless mammoths a permanency and wholesomeness seldom associated with beacons of capitalism. They were not “built”, suggesting temporality and the possibility to destroy them, but “planted”, symbolising perhaps the colonisation of North America, that they are endemic features of the land

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<sup>4</sup> John Eldridge (1993: 6) likens such limited discourse with the definition in George Orwell’s *1984* of so-called Newspeak, which exposes the often latent relationship between truth and power: “In (Orwell’s) fictional anti-utopia, ‘the purpose of Newspeak was not only to provide a medium of expression for the world-view and mental habits proper to the devotees of Ingsoc, but to make all other modes of thought impossible.’”

<sup>5</sup> In *The History of Sexuality* Foucault affords discourse a more flexible role in sustaining *or* undermining power structures: “Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowances for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it” (Young, 1981: 51).



which grew from and at the same time nurtured it. The towers were also oft personified. In *Time*, the buildings “shuddered” and “cringed” before being reduced to “jagged stumps”; *Newsweek* wrote terrorists struck at “our heart” (p. 2) and *The New York Times* (Schemann, 2001) referred to the “smoking, ash-choked carcasses of the twin towers”.

Frames are thus drawn at the media’s behest. Framing the attacks as “terror” places the focus on the effects of hostile action, the destruction of property, the loss of life, fear, chaos and panic. A population can be terrorised from within or without, by human acts and natural catastrophes (Clark, 2001b). Framing September 11 as an “attack” sets in motion “the rhetoric of war”. “It comes as no surprise that allusions to Pearl Harbour have ... become part of the national outrage. The language of war has consequences,” Clark warns. “It anticipates formal declarations. It imagines counter-attacks. It begins to define and dehumanise an enemy. Within the current frame, that enemy is ‘likely’ to look a certain way and dress a certain way and practice a certain religion. The collateral damage of building a culture of war is xenophobia and paranoia, much of it directed at our own (American) citizens.”

In an interview late in September 2001, the American commentator and philosopher Noam Chomsky (2001a), bemoaning scant coverage of displays of dissent to American plans to launch military action against Afghanistan, criticised the framing of the “terror attacks” as if it were a war. Not that the media first named them so – it was president George W. Bush who, after learning of the attacks, turned to his staff and said, “We’re at war”. At that moment, “what might have been treated as a crime became a *causus belli*,” contends Paul Reynolds, former Washington correspondent for the BBC (in Baxter et al., 2001: 85, 88). But the media adopted Bush’s jargon, notwithstanding the suggestion in *New Yorker* magazine that information available to the US administration shortly after the attacks was worse, or no better, than that available to the television viewer.

Although Chomsky concedes that the attacks were “terrible crimes”, they were no war. “There is a reason why it is not called a crime, which it is, but a war, which it isn’t ... Crime is specific, and if it is a crime you have to present evidence ... [I]t’s very likely that the evidence the United States have is not

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<sup>6</sup> Although not obviously prevalent in the examined newspapers and magazines after September 11, the framing of the enemy in the guise of a hated, “universal” enemy has been a preferred method of justifying military action in the public domain in past wars, as appears from analogies likening Saddam Hussein to Adolf Hitler in the Gulf War, argues Carruthers (2000: 42). In August of 1990 alone, at least seven British newspapers likened Hussein to Hitler, and in America the Gannett Foundation (later the Freedom Forum) listed 1035 references to Hussein as Hitler between 1 August 1990 and 28 February 1991 in the American print media (Keeble, cited in Kieran, 1998: 73). “The endlessly repeated Hitler analogy represented a highly selective, ideologically motivated use of history by the USA and its prominent allies. For its essential purpose was to draw on pre-Cold War rhetoric to silence many histories, in particular the imperial roles of the USA and UK in the Middle-East and more globally” (1998: 74).



credible.” Chomsky was, arguably, later proven wrong,<sup>7</sup> but the initial coverage of the attacks enforced a prevalent system of popular beliefs about America that was evidently not value-free.

If it were, then conflicting renderings of the same event would necessarily imply that one storyteller got it all wrong, or wrote about a different event by mistake. Instead, conflicting reports testify, after September 11, that the press often chooses – albeit sometimes unintentionally – to use news toward ideological ends, and that these ends may differ. They might suggest that America is first a victim of terrorism, but could never perpetrate terror itself. Or depict America as the leader of the “free world”, something which is not self-evident but owes an “ineluctable debt to interpretation”, as Campbell argues all language does. Understanding always entails rendering the “unfamiliar in terms of the familiar” and if interpretation is unavoidable, then discourse is, too. The prudent thing for journalists to do, Campbell implores, is at least to consider the “manifest political consequences of adopting one mode of representation over another” (1993: 8).

Sensitivity to discourse in news representations is crucial when evaluating the coverage of America’s foremost journalists after September 11. It is to this evaluation that I now turn.

## 1.2. *Time* magazine

“If you want to humble an empire, it makes sense to maim its cathedrals. They are the symbols of its faith, and when they crumple and burn, it tells us we are not so powerful and we can’t be safe. The twin towers of the World Trade Centre, planted at the base of Manhattan island with the Statue of Liberty as their sentry, and the Pentagon, a squat, concrete fort on the banks of the Potomac, are the sanctuaries of money and power that our enemies may imagine define us. But that assumes our faith rests on what we can buy and build, and that has never been America’s true God” (Gibbs, 2001).

In this introductory paragraph to a textual exposition over 13 pages of “the bloodiest day on American soil since our civil war,” Nancy Gibbs, senior editor of *Time*, touched on powerful narrative strains characteristic of coverage of September 11 in general (see Addendum A). In one paragraph, America is grandly depicted as an “empire”, suggesting power and global influence, the targets of the attacks as

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<sup>7</sup> Perhaps still “circumstantial evidence”, a videotape released on April 15 2002 “strongly suggested” that bin Laden was involved in the September assaults, the *New York Times* reported (Golden, 2002). Ahmed Alhaznawi (20), identified as one of the September 11 hijackers of United Airlines flight 93 which crashed in Pennsylvania, said his death was intended to send the message that “it is time to kill Americans in their own homeland”. Showed on the Qatari satellite channel Al-Jazeera, a segment of the same tape showed bin Laden “sitting contemplatively beside his second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahiri,” as al-Zawahiri hailed the attacks a “great victory,” the *Times* reported. “Those 19 brothers who left us made efforts and offered their lives for the cause of Allah,” al-Zawahiri said of the hijackers. “Allah has favoured them with this conquest, which we are enjoying now.” At one point, al-Zawahiri reads from a spiral-bound notebook entitled the last will “of the New York and Washington Battle Martyrs”. Of course, here the attacks are branded *a posteriori* as a “battle,” suggesting that American aggression preceded it – a wholly different “framing”, predictably, than any in the American press.



“cathedrals”, suggesting the sacrilegious nature of its destruction, and the victims of the attacks as “we”, suggesting the media’s solidarity with rather than distance from story subjects.<sup>8</sup>

Prominently, *Time* placed America within a context of spiritual and material superiority, at once alluding to the abundant money and power which the World Trade Centre (WTC) and Pentagon signified, but also severing the supposed dependence of its people on worldly success by alluding to spirituality.

Analogies to Pearl Harbour employed in *Newsweek* and in *Time* (in references to “a new day of infamy”, see *infra*), introduced a rich discourse of war, and stirred expectations of an isolated America forced once again to engage in the world. Reiterating the war-like aftermath, *Time* spoke of crowds in the streets of New York as “refugees” marching “away from the battlefield”, of “war-like mobilisation” and “highly trained enemy terrorists”. It reported that some Administration officials were considering drafting a “declaration of war” but that the State Department was “leery since nobody knows precisely whom the war would be against.” This is an important observation, the absence of which would have skewed the conflict into a traditional war symmetry in which the enemy is clearly defined.

Indeed, only on the penultimate page did *Time* speculate about the attackers’ identity. Palestinians, Iranians, Libyans and Iraqis were all discounted as unlikely suspects, with a brief account of reasons. Such speculation is legitimate. It would be inimical to the purposeful stimulation of debate in society if speculation about the attackers’ identity were deemed beyond the scope of sound journalism, although the discourse alluded to in the language employed in speculations needs always to be carefully considered. In *Time*, Osama bin Laden was not overtly cast as “evil”, although attributed the “will, wallet and gall to attack America” after initiating attacks on the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998 and the USS Cole in Yemen in 2000 (Marsden, 2001: 57; Baxter et al., 2001: 76).

Gibbs also did not cower from vivid descriptions of the horror of death, hinting at least at an unwillingness to hide the brutality of attacks notwithstanding the danger of “hurting morale”. “People burnt from head to toe; hands, legs, whole bodies falling from the air ...” and “Whole stretches of street were slick with blood, and up and down the avenues you could hear the screams of people plunging from the burning tower”. It drew on controversial alliances: “Terror has struck us ... Now we are all Israelis,” a rabbi said. But Americans prevailed: “There was remarkably little panic – more steel and ingenuity.”

When considering the creation (or continuation) of discourse in the news, *Time*’s religious analogies are notable. The metaphors in the lead paragraph (“cathedrals”, “faith”, “God”) echoed throughout

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<sup>8</sup> *Time* did not number the pages of its special edition after September 11. All references to text are to the article by Gibbs, cited in the bibliography at the end of this assignment.



Gibbs's copy in references to people beginning to "say their prayers", a quote of a survivor urging his fellows to "breathe, breathe, Christ is on our side", and "houses of all kinds of worship" across the country filling with "grieving Americans singing *America the Beautiful*, wiping away streams of tears". It appears to be a story of a nation humbled, but also strong in courage and faith.

On a double page spread, amid 28 pages of photographs, *Time* employed a powerful symbol of defiance against the onslaught of "Islamic fundamentalism", a theme which seethed into news coverage as the supposed inspiration of the chief terrorist suspect, Osama bin Laden. Against the jumbled background of the tumbling WTC, a stone cross protrudes unscathed from a rooftop in a photograph by *Time's* James Nachtwey. With the caption "Holy War", this picture (see Addendum A) communicates the resilience of Christian (or Western, post-Judeo-Christian secular) society in spite of the attacks. The combination of the caption and photograph moulded the conflict simply into a religious dichotomy: "As large swaths of lower Manhattan were turning to dust, further uptown, at First Presbyterian on Fifth Avenue, the faithful gathered to hear the Rev. Jon Walton's 'service of mourning and lament'."

The conflict depicted here between the cross and the devastation supposedly spawned by extremism, reinforces a psychosis of moral rectitude in America which draws on the fervour of medieval Crusades (Bush later equalled the "war on terror" with a "crusade", Baxter et al., 2001: 92, 141) as well as on the pervasive fear in the West of the consequences of a "jihad" or "holy war". *Time's* pictorial narrative was powerful, and complemented the text by illustrating destruction, but also "unselfish" civilians performing triage, carrying bodies, and watching teary-eyed in an Iowa classroom as the WTC crumbled. It purported to be a historical document, and in the scope of its material, succeeds.

Its editorial account refrained from calls for revenge, as opposed to an essay on its last page in which Lance Morrow called for a "unified, unifying, Pearl Harbour sort of purple American fury – a ruthless indignation that doesn't leak away in a week or two". Whereas Morrow exploited the findings of a *Time* opinion poll which found that 80% of Americans were "ready to go to war", deemed a "fatuous rhetoric about healing inappropriate and dangerous" and warned against a "corruptly thoughtful relativism" in response to the attacks, the news report displayed remarkable restraint.

### **1.3. Newsweek**

The "breathtaking audacity" of the attacks permeated the text of this magazine's eight articles on what it dubbed "black Tuesday". Compared with *Time*, *Newsweek* (see Addendum B) did not shy away from inflammatory language, nor from tainting all "Arabs" with suspicion in its simplistic rejection of avowals of innocence in the attacks by the Taliban, Palestinian Authority and president Saddam Hussein of Iraq (*Newsweek Extra Edition*, 2001: 28).



In an article which named the Saudi dissident and Al Qaeda-leader Osama bin Laden as “suspect No. 1”, Libya’s colonel Muammar Qaddafi and Hussein were pictured alongside a photograph of the convicted 1993 World Trade Centre bomber Ramzi Yousef under the caption “the foes we face” (p. 38, see Addendum B). After basing its accusations against bin Laden on preliminary information leaked from an unnamed source “with access to intelligence”, *Newsweek* discounted sceptically denials of involvement in the attacks: “The Taliban, known for harbouring terrorists, insisted that bin Laden could not possibly have arranged so devilish a plot”. Also Yasser Arafat “insisted” he was “shocked” by the attacks. These denials, clothed in similar language and thus regarded as equally plausible, were juxtaposed to celebrations in the West Bank, Gaza and Baghdad, discrediting Arab avowals of innocence. That “Arabs” were perceived to be a coherent group of dangerous people, appears from a reference to so-called “Arab watchers” who, like a former US ambassador to Syria and Saudi Arabia, Richard Murphy, feared that the successful attacks might “inspire” other Arabs to attempt similar feats (p. 28).

Against these foes, America could not fight alone, *Newsweek* contended. “It needs the help of freedom-loving nations around the globe”. This dichotomy between untrustworthy Arabs and freedom-loving Americans is entrenched in descriptions of the “cowardice” of the “killers” versus the “resolve” of American “heroes” in events the cause of which had been “evil”. “America is the last great superpower, held hostage by a few desperate zealots armed with pocket-knives ... They, and their mysterious co-conspirators, showed considerable cleverness as well as a willingness to die for Allah” (p. 26).

Whereas *Time* alluded to the notion of a “holy war” in a photo caption and subtle textual religious metaphors, *Newsweek* cast the reasons for the attacks explicitly within the foreign domain (for Westerners) of the “jihad”, suggesting that the reason for the attacks was not political grievances that could be dealt with in a reasoned way, but an irrational Islamic extremism. For the journalist attempting to interpret events, a simplistic suggestion that the attacks were carried out because of a “willingness to die for Allah”, does not go far enough. The only attempt at explaining the reasons for the attacks in terms of America’s foreign policy, or anything other than the capricious aggression of Islamists is made on the magazine’s penultimate page (p. 63). “Nini Halkett asked her 11<sup>th</sup>-grade AP American-history class why terrorists hate us so much. ‘Because we get involved in foreign affairs when it’s not our place,’ said Cami, 16, ‘and because we have an elitist attitude’.”

Even admitting to the merit of Ms Halkett’s question one does not escape a dominant discourse of unquestioned American innocence. The discursive rules which place terrorists outside of the familiar sphere, depicting them as a group of hateful “zealots” with “suicidal fervour”, makes it impossible, as Foucault suggests, to speak of Americans themselves as terrorists. The moral opprobrium of such terminology (see 2.1.3. *infra*) is thus declared invalid in references to American actions.



That Americans were innocent victims of terror is emphasised by the image of small-town America superimposed on New York City in the depictions of individual victims of the attacks. Instead of portraying a faceless body of office-workers (as was the case when referring to the homogeneous “Arabs”, previous page), stories about people like a 22-year-old financial worker strengthen the narrative with personal accounts of terror or sadness. “In New York City, it was 8.45 a.m. Rush hour was just winding down. Jason Braunstein, 22, was finishing a plate of hash browns at his desk in a stock brokerage on the 87<sup>th</sup> floor of Tower One of the WTC when the first plane ... augured in about 10 floors up ...” Likewise, Ms. Barbara Chandler, human-resources director at a consulting firm on the 77<sup>th</sup> floor, saw “glass flying” and felt a “crash, rocking” (p. 26).

Through personal accounts, sometimes comprising banal details such as a reference to Braunstein’s hash browns, a familiarity with the victims is bred through shared human interest, and the foe of Braunstein and Chandler becomes the readers’, too. Indeed, the human interest story can be an effective propaganda tool, argues Richard Keeble, because it “simplifies an enormously complex history, seriously distorting the representation of the conflict and drawing attention away from other important social, political, geostratic, religious and economic factors” (cited in Kieran, 1998: 72).

*Time* and *Newsweek* avoided “human interest” accounts of high-profile executives who doubtless occupied many offices in the towers. Voice was given, instead, to ordinary people, the “foot soldiers” of capitalism and the American monetary system of which the WTC was symbolic. In depicting victims as “ordinary men and women, sitting down to begin a day’s work” (p. 46), the pool from which empathy could be drawn was broadened. The power of the human-interest story is clear and a first-person narrative of “us” and “we”, lavishly used, made somehow more plausible.

#### **1.4. The front page: A discourse analysis**

Across the United States, newspapers in diverse markets searched for ways to report on the attacks that would best serve local readers. Residents of small towns who knew family or friends working in the WTC were called on for interviews, local war veterans pronounced similarities with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941, and the “faithful” gathered in churches everywhere to pray.

Overwhelmingly, the attacks were described as acts of “terrorism”, echoing a speech by Pres. George W. Bush shortly afterwards in which he said “terrorism against our nation will not stand” (*The San Diego Union-Tribune*, Poynter, p. 10). Many other echoes of Bush’s speech (see Addendum C) permeated front pages of American newspapers. The words, “Today, our nation saw evil”, was widely quoted or used in headings. Bush also quoted from the Bible (Psalm 23): “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil for you are with me”. Several papers recounted this.



From a quantitative survey of the headings and text on 122 front pages of American newspapers selected by the Poynter Institute of Media Studies in St. Petersburg, Florida, it appears that in spite of the pervasive use of common news sources (especially a story by David Crary and Jerry Schwartz from the Associated Press), the packaging and focus of each product aimed to impress the consequences of New York and Washington's woes on the entire nation and its local constituencies. Table 1 (see also Chart 1) shows which were the most used phrases in describing the attacks, and thereby indicate, simply, how the attacks were understood and portrayed.

From different language use schisms also appear about the perceived role of the media. Hence, a brief analysis follows, with specific reference to headings and historical references to war.

#### 1.4.1. Headings: *The news, in a word*

In its entirety, a newspaper is a "text". Every component of this text seeks to convey information, be it the heading, news copy, photograph, graphic, or even the way in which a page is designed. Each component represents another portrayal or description, and some rely on their self-evidence and impact to lure a "reader" (because this text is "read" merely by looking at it) from one component to another. Thus a photograph or heading is mostly regarded as the primary "entry-point" to a page. They are almost without exception the dominant design elements; they take up the most space and are first seen. As such they play an important role in defining the initial "angle" of a news story: the heading should capture, even read in isolation, the single most important facet of a news event.

Thus, as seen in Chart 1, the most common word in American newspaper headings was "attack" or "attacked", used 41 times in the 122 papers surveyed. In combining "U.S." and "attacked" in "U.S. Attacked", *The New York Times* (see Addendum D), among others,<sup>9</sup> employed a most lucid, cautious description. Indeed, this is "objectively" true, and describing the events as an "attack", although it might evoke the fear of war, involves no evaluation or interpretation. There were many variations; among them *The Orange County Register Extra* in California's "America Attacked",<sup>10</sup> "Attack" (on five front pages), "Attacks Level Trade Centre" (*The Philadelphia Enquirer, Extra*, p. 91) and "Target: America" (*The Tampa Tribune*, Florida, p. 28). Some headings, like *The Denver Post's* "ATTACK", spanned the entire width of the page and thus attested to the magnitude of the events.

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<sup>9</sup> The same headline was used in *The Arizona Republic* (p. 2), *The Flint Journal*, Michigan (p. 53), and *The Free Lance-Star*, Virginia (p. 107). Front pages not included in the addenda are referenced by their page number in Poynter, 2001.

<sup>10</sup> See also *Newsday, Extra*, New York (p. 69). Papers using "America under attack" were the *St. Petersburg Times, Extra* (p. 27); *The Oakland Press, Extra* (p. 55) and *The State*, South Carolina (p. 94). "U.S. under Attack", said the *Chicago Tribune, Extra* (p. 32). Two papers used the line "Attack on America" – the *Daily Southtown, Extra*, Chicago (p. 33), and *The Kansas City Star*, Missouri (p. 60).



**TABLE 1: LANGUAGE USE IN THE PRESS AFTER SEPTEMBER 11\***

References to...	Headings	Copy**	References to...	Headings	Copy
Attack / attacked	41	55	Tragedy	2	13
Terrorist / terrorism	28	144	Devastation / destruction	2	2
Terror / terrorized	27	28	Disaster / catastrophe	2	5
Death / dead / killed	20	69	Pearl Harbor	1	56
Evil	13	45	Justice	0	3
War	11	18	Afghanistan	0	12
Osama bin Laden	9	49	Al-Qaeda	0	4
Horror	7	9	Murderers / killers	0	2
Shock / paralyze	6	10	Innocence	0	2
Unthinkable	6	1	Outrage	0	1
Retaliation, revenge	6	18	Mass murder	0	3
The Christian faith	5	15	Carnage	0	6
Infamy	4	2	Disbelief	0	1
Nightmare / nightmarish	3	5	American resolve	0	9

\*Compiled from 122 front pages of American newspapers on 11, 12 September 2001; \*\* Including captions, quotes and decks

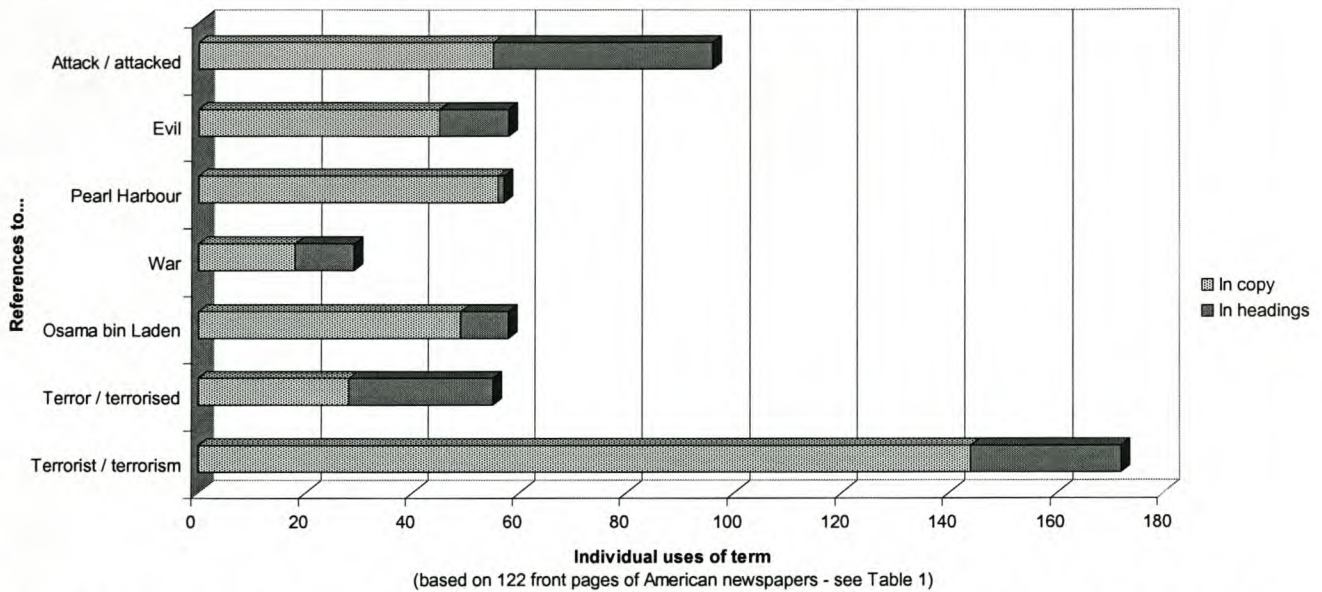
In contrast to the restraint of *The New York Times* stood the indignity at the attacks that slight punctuation changes suggested. So the *Globe Gazette Extra* in Iowa proclaimed “Attacked!” (p. 39), with an exclamation mark as if to say, “Can you believe it?”, and the *Philadelphia Daily News Extra*, “Attack!” (p. 90; Addendum E). *The News & Advance Extra* in Lynchburg, Virginia, used the same heading (p. 108). There is a difference in tone. “ATTACK!” acknowledges at least the magnitude of the attack in its exclamation, and implicitly also the rarity of such events on American soil. It marks a first level of interpretation, beyond mere reflection, which is what “U.S. Attacked” attempted.

Progressing toward more manifest interpretations, several papers voiced what most Americans thought, How could this happen to us? Not since the bloodiest single day in American history when more than 6000 were killed or wounded at Antietam in the Civil War on 17 September 1862 (*The Economist*, 2002b), and the attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941 which claimed 2300, did Americans witness such carnage on American soil. The attacks were “Unthinkable”, proclaimed five papers, among them the *Arizona Daily Star* (p. 3, see Addendum F).<sup>11</sup> Such a framing resonates with Foucault’s argument that rules of discourse delineate a “legitimate perspective” outside of which events cannot reasonably be interpreted. To deem an attack on America “unthinkable” denies legitimacy to a paradigm of American vulnerability and possible complicity in fomenting hatred towards its people. The

<sup>11</sup> The *Star* was joined in this depiction by the *The Register-Guard*, Eugene, Oregon, (84); *The Patriot-News*, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (87); *Bucks County Courier Times, Extra*, Levittown, Pennsylvania (88) and *The Salt Lake Tribune*, Utah (106).



CHART 1: Predominant language use in press, 11-12 September 2001



attacks are “unthinkable” precisely because America is a “superpower” and “terrorism” usually occurs abroad.

The *Star* published a large picture of United Airlines flight 175 a moment before it crashed into the south WTC tower, with a caption, “Moment of horror”. In this “framing”, it is arguably the nature of the “weapons” (passenger jets) rather than the fact of the attack that is “unthinkable”. Others deemed September 11 an “Outrage”, a “Disaster”, “Nightmare” (see Addendum G) or an “American Tragedy” (2001: 29, 34, 11, 99, 48). The latter depiction is a stark juxtaposition to the “American Dream”. Seven newspapers described it with “Horror” or variations thereof.<sup>12</sup> The *Virginia Pilot* excelled in its sombre design, with an enormous (larger than 200 points), red “Horror” on a black background, a radical departure from its usual, black-on-white make-up and again a testament to the singularity of the day.

Besides its description of the September Tuesday as “America’s Darkest Day”, The *Detroit Free Press* in Michigan (p. 51) wrote, “not since Pearl Harbour has a day suggested such infamy” after “the worst attack ever on the United States”.<sup>13</sup> Others shared this view. Louisiana’s *The Times-Picayune* (p. 44) carried in bold print “Darkest Day” and “Terror Hits Home”. The *Philadelphia citypaper* proclaimed “Nothing will ever be the same” (p. 89, see Addendum H), echoing “Our World is Changed” (p. 93) of *The Gamecock* at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, “None of us will ever forget this day” in

<sup>12</sup> *The Virginia-Pilot*, Norfolk (p. 110) likewise led with “Horror”. “American Horror”, said *The Fresno Bee, Extra*, California (p. 5); “Horror!” the *Los Angeles Daily News* (p. 7), and “Day of Horror”, *The Roanoke Times*, Virginia (p. 112).

<sup>13</sup> The same heading was used in *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, Virginia (p. 111), and a variation in the *Staten Island Advance*, New York (p. 73), with “The Longest Day”.



the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* in Missouri (p. 61), “None of us will ever forget” in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Washington (p. 115) and “America Savaged, Forever Changed” in *The Detroit News* (p. 52). The significance of the events was not lost on the world community – newspapers as far afield as Cape Town (“Moment the world changed” in the *Cape Times*) and Norrköping in Sweden (“Världen i chock efter attacken” / “World in shock after attacks”, p. 144) suggested that “terror” in America necessarily reverberates elsewhere and, in a way, legitimises Americans’ suggestion that nothing *would* ever be the same. The sudden significance the date would assume as supposed historical turning point, was suggested by several papers that declared starkly *only* the date, among them France’s *Libération*: “11 Septembre 2001” (p. 133).

It is notable how many newspapers referred to a speech by President George W. Bush on the evening of September 11 (see references to “evil”, “terrorist” and “terrorism”, p. 16). After a day in which he was constantly in the air, avoiding Washington in fear of another attack, Bush returned to the White house that evening for a widely televised address to the American nation. “Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts. The victims were in aeroplanes or in their offices – secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers. Moms and dads. Friends and neighbours. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror” (Bush, 2001a. See Addendum C). Bush spoke of “disbelief” at seeing the towers tumble, a “terrible sadness and a quiet, unyielding anger”. He named the attacks “acts of mass murder” that have moved a “great people ... to defend a great nation”. “America was targeted for attack because we’re the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining. Today, our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature...”

Thirteen papers subsequently adopted the word “evil” in headlines. Five lead with Bush’s exact words, “Our nation saw evil” (see Addendum I),<sup>14</sup> in quotation marks, signifying not an endorsement but a representation of a notable condemnation. In fact, not a single newspaper used the word “evil” without quotation marks,<sup>15</sup> recognising through this restraint the clear prejudice the word conveys.

Not the same, though, with “terror”. In 55 newspapers the words “terror” or “terrorist” and its variations (“terrorised” and “terrorism”) were used – never in quotation marks (see addenda). It was the one idea that captured not only the nature of the onslaught, but did justice to the nation’s reaction – “terror” means “extreme fear” or something which causes it (*Oxford Concise Dictionary*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed.). It is rich in

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<sup>14</sup> *The Daily Californian*, University of California, Berkeley, p. 4; *Austin American-Statesman*, Texas, p. 100; *Greely Tribune*, Colorado, p. 16; *Kalamazoo Gazette Extra*, Michigan, p. 54; *Omaha World-Herald*, Nebraska, p. 64



imagery and history – it evokes memories of sudden, brutal attacks, mostly on civilians, making it almost less bearable than war, which, in its pure form, targets soldiers. It suggests outrage, shock, anxiety and fear. In its various permutations, it conveyed that terror is no longer only a foreign phenomenon, eating away at Americans' sense of safety and imposing involuntary vulnerability. Examples are "Terror in the Streets" (p. 46), "Terror Hits Home" (pp. 45, 80, 104, see Addenda J1, 2) and "Terrorists Strike America" (p. 102). On the West Coast, the *Seattle Times* lead with "Terrorist attacks horrify nation" (p. 116, Addendum J3), and added in a deck below, "Destruction and death far away felt close to home". The faraway tragedy is thus localised, encouraging, in the framing by the media, a sense of American nationhood and community. The justifiability of the use of the word "terror" and "terrorism" will be critically considered in chapter 2 below.

#### 1.4.2. A Discourse of war emerges

"A date which will live in infamy." Thus American President Franklin D. Roosevelt described the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in Hawaii on December 7, 1941 (Roosevelt speech, 1941). The attacks were unexpected and claimed more than 2,300 lives. "Always will we remember the character of the onslaught against us ... The American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory," Roosevelt said. He then declared war with the Empire of Japan – and entry into World War II.

On September 11, 2001, the attacks in America killed slightly more than 3000 people (*Time*, 2002: 54) – but unlike Pearl Harbour, they were civilians, and the attacker was not another country.

"Infamy!" cried the *Albuquerque Journal* in New Mexico (p. 67). "Infamy", stated the *Washington Times* (p. 22). And in New York and Washington State, *The Journal News* (p. 74) and *The Spokesman-Review* (p. 117) described the attacks as "A New Day of Infamy" (see Addendum K). Thus the anger, emotion and will to military retaliation of 1941 were transposed six decades; so too a conviction of America's "righteous might". Indeed, Senator Chuck Hagel, a Republican from Nebraska, was quoted in more than 50 papers equating September 11 with December 7. "This is the second Pearl Harbour. I don't think that I overstate it" (Associated Press report, *Poynter*, 2001: 76). The national edition of *The Christian Science Monitor* was one of several papers that drew parallels with the destruction of Battleship Row. " 'Mommy, it looks just like Pearl Harbour on TV' – an 11 year-old boy, leaving for school in Los Angeles," read a prominent front-page quote.

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<sup>15</sup> Other variations included "Evil Acts of Terror" in the *Reporter-Herald*, Colorado, p. 18, "Evil Acts" in *The Miami Herald*, p. 25; *Billings Gazette*, Montana, p. 62 and *The Commercial Appeal*, Memphis, Tennessee, p. 96; "Evil" in the *Lawrence Journal-World*, Kansas, p. 40, and "Bush vows to punish 'evil' acts of terror" in *The Sacramento Bee*, California, p. 9.



In this subtle way, the rhetoric of war was introduced into the coverage of September 11. The implications of evoking war-like discourse into peacetime interpretations of acts of violence have been alluded to above (p. 8): It “anticipates formal declarations ... Imagines counter-attacks ... begins to define and dehumanise the enemy,” said Clark (2001b). Albeit arguably unavoidable in some circumstances, the phenomenon of war is the ultimate substitute for conversation, deliberation and debate; a discourse of war patently obviates the political search for non-violent alternatives.

The word “war” was used in 11 headlines of those newspaper surveyed, and 18 times in news copy, and many mentioned that US military forces “around the world were put on a ‘go to war’ footing, the highest state of alert next to actual military action” (*San Jose Mercury News*, p. 13). Although no newspaper attributed the phrase “Acts of War” to a specific official, it was widely used – it might have been a reference to a remark Bush had made to his staff on the 11<sup>th</sup>, repeated in public only the next morning (Baxter et al., 2001: 85). The *Hartford Courant* quoted Nebraska’s Hagel saying, “If you can do this to the USA and get at two symbols of the strength of America, that tells you essentially we are at war”.

But war was never formally declared. Whereas *USA Today* (see Addendum L) and the *San Jose Mercury News* in California (p. 121, 13) used quotation marks in “Act of War” and “Acts of War”, implying they convey an appraisal and will attribute it to someone later, the *Hartford Courant*, *The Day* in Connecticut and New York’s *Daily News* were not so modest. Proclaiming “Act of War”, “Acts of War” and “It’s War!” these papers (pp. 19, 20, 70) furnished the attacks in an irrefutable martial frame. References to “revenge”, “retribution” or “retaliation” appeared 18 times in the surveyed papers, reinforcing the perception among Americans that America was at war and its retaliation justified.<sup>16</sup>

This interpretation was not only achieved through linguistic references, but also graphic analogy.

After the WTC collapsed, three firemen paused to raise the American flag amid the rubble. Thomas E. Franklin of the Associated Press caught the moment on film; the *Sun* and the *Skagit Valley Herald* in Washington State and Wisconsin’s *The Post-Crescent*<sup>17</sup> saw in Franklin’s photo, with its skewed flag-post, a composition of heroic figures raising the Stars and Stripes in turbulent times (see Addendum N1, 2). And a striking similarity to an icon of World War II – the raising of the Iwo Jima Flag.

In February 1945 that picture by Joe Rosenthal, an AP-photographer later awarded the Pulitzer Prize, would give Americans new hope in their desperate and expensive bid to conquer the Japanese in the

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<sup>16</sup> Besides *The Dallas Morning Herald*’s “War at home” (p. 103), a number of international newspapers also “declared” war. In South Africa, the Cape Town daily *Die Burger* led in large, black type with “Dis Oorlog!” (It’s War!). In Australia, *The Sydney Morning Herald* proclaimed “Bush: this means war” (p. 123); in Rio de Janeiro, *O Dia* stated “Guerra” (“War”, p. 124), in London *The Guardian* deemed the attacks themselves “A declaration of war” (p. 131) and in Stockholm the *Aftonbladet* splashed the words “Terror-Krig Mot Usa” (“Terror-war with USA”) across its front page (p. 145).



Pacific. The raising of the Iwo Jima Flag on mount Suribachi by six American marines followed the bloodiest battle in Marine Corps history (Buell, 1999: xx, see Addendum O). Rosenthal's picture showed six Americans, "all for one, working together in victory and valour; and above them, Old Glory," Buell wrote. "Finally, for the first time, a clear, simple statement from the Pacific gripped the United States" (1999: 23). A large bronze statue in the image of the picture was dedicated in Arlington, Virginia, in 1954 and more than 117 million postage stamps with Rosenthal's photo were sold in America after the war.

The incidental similarity between these two photos draws parallels to a war in which a passive America was attacked by another country and became entangled in a conflict which few regarded as avoidable and which America patently did not initiate (Blanning, 2000: 224). The analogy with Pearl Harbor runs deep and fortifies nationalistic self-confidence, and by necessary inference it situates America's "war on terror" in a moral milieu akin to that of 1941. America's press indulged (see chart 1). But such proud analogies as the flag-raising at Ground Zero to that at Suribachi, also attests to a sense of responsibility in the press to encourage and inspire, to show images reminiscent of American grit and resilience and to read into its public duty more than the mere transmission of information. So, *The Star-Ledger* in New Jersey portrayed a "breath of life from the rubble" after a successful search for "Survivors", its main heading (p. 66). *The Daily Mississippian's* "One Nation ... Indivisible" (page 59) encourages calm. And Franklin's picture courage.

### 1.5. Perpetuating the dominant view

Famously, John Stuart Mill advocated the proper environment for the emergence of truth. He argued that, instead of suppressing information that may yet be proved valuable and accurate and silencing views that seem inappropriate, all expression should compete freely in a so-called "marketplace of ideas". Eventually, after thorough scrutiny, truth will be victorious. The first premise for Mill's argument in favour of freedom of expression reads: "If any opinion is compelled to silence, that opinion may, for ought we can certainly know, be true. To deny this is to assume our own infallibility" (Mill, 1974: 115). Even an erroneous opinion "may, and very commonly does, contain a portion of truth; and since the general or prevailing opinion on any subject is rarely or never the whole truth, it is only by the collision of adverse opinions that the remainder of the truth has any chance of being supplied" (1974: 116).

The views of two prominent critics of America's foreign policy will show in the next chapter that adverse opinions were put forward challenging the "prevailing opinion" on September 11 which appeared from the analyses in the preceding parts of this chapter. Although prevailing wisdom dictates that Mill's

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<sup>17</sup> Los Angeles's *Daily News* also used the AP-photo, but not as main picture.



“whole truth” is but a naïve imaginary ideal, his notion of a plurality of opinions in the interest of a more thoroughly considered rendition of the truth, remains of critical importance in democracies.

The notion of a “frame” – suggesting subjective representation – should not be relinquished in deference to Mill. But acts of censorship and propaganda prevented, in the direct aftermath of September 11, the uninhibited formation of media frames of the attacks, suggesting that, in this “marketplace”, a more complete “truth” was given but half a chance. In what follows, the role of censorship and propaganda in the preservation of a dominant media frame of the attacks and America’s role vis-à-vis its adversaries will be briefly considered. The premise is that the formation of a frame is determined as much by what the frame includes as by that which it excludes. The process of exclusion is thus a constituent part of the framing process. The substance of dissent that was targeted in the actions hence recounted, is a matter for the next chapter.

### *1.5.1. Censorship*

“War has never been good for freedom of expression. Before even truth, the first casualty of war is ... this freedom: the freedom to investigate and report, the freedom to publish criticisms and revelations” (Marthoz, 2002).

Almost eight months after September 11, Jean-Paul Marthoz, director of Human Rights Watch in Europe, focused on the toll the attacks had taken on precisely this freedom in an address for World Press Freedom Day, 3 May 2002. Marthoz’s conclusions were discouraging to those who value a free press. The US government had put a “cloak on information that is unprecedented,” said Chuck Lewis, Washington bureau chief for Hearst newspapers (cited in Shields, 2001).

These restrictions manifested in various guises. Firstly, formal legislation was passed in several countries limiting media freedom, especially after the “war on terrorism” was formalised on October 7. According to UNESCO, eleven countries – mostly in the West – “announced, proposed or adopted” legal measures to regulate the press more vigorously.<sup>18</sup> Among them were America, Britain, Australia, Canada and members of the EU (Marthoz, 2002). These measures, however, seldom constituted formal censorship by legislating the parameters of news reports.

Much more pervasive – especially in the US – were requests by government to limit the supposed damage uncontrolled news coverage of the attacks and its aftermath would have on national security and civilian morale. This tension – between the media’s right to provide information to the public and



the government's need to protect sensitive information during times of war – is rooted in the American Civil War, argues Croteau, when generals read Southern newspapers to gain information about troop strengths and movements (1999: 112). The media sustained a “cordial” relationship with the military into the Second World War, voluntarily complying with restrictions of information “and in many ways help(ing) promote the Allied war effort”. Extensive television coverage of the Vietnam War, however, changed this alliance after perceptions that irresponsible media coverage sapped support for war. Caruthers cites an estimated 15 percentage points drop in public support for the Vietnam war as casualties rose by a factor of ten (2000: 152). She doubts, however, whether television alone was responsible (2000: 110, 149). Thus, in the Gulf War, some papers carried announcements on their front pages declaring that U.S. military censors had approved all information about the war (Croteau, 1999: 113).

In the aftermath of September 11, government “censorship” was different – presidential spokesperson Ari Fleischer warned during a press briefing that “all Americans must watch what they say” (McMasters, 2001). Pres. George W. Bush severely restricted briefings to congress to stop leaks of sensitive information; his secretary of defence Donald Rumsfeld warned the nation to “expect more secrecy” and ordered defence contractors to cut off contact with the press, and in the Justice department, John Ashcroft issued a restrictive policy on requests in terms of the Freedom of Information Act, aimed at increasing government control of “sensitive” information. In a widely publicised request for media restraint, US National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice implored representatives of the five biggest US television networks, including CNN, not to broadcast complete interviews with Osama bin Laden as they may contain “coded messages” to terrorist cells, spurring them into action (Gordon Corera in Baxter et al, 2001: 73; Zeleny, 2001). Fleischer, however, said the Bush administration never proposed censorship. “There are no orders,” he told the *Chicago Tribune* on October 12. “These are requests.”

Although “requests” directed at the Qatari satellite television station Al-Jazeera not to broadcast interviews with bin Laden were not heeded, some US broadcasters complied. Walter Isaacson, president of CNN, replied: “After hearing Rice we’re not going to step on any of the landmines she was talking about” (Rayner, 2001).

This willingness to enact self-censorship also characterised some newspapers – in Oregon and Texas columnists were dismissed for criticising the president (Keifer, 2001). Critics were “battered into silence”. Susan Sontag, a writer, made some critical remarks on America’s response to September 11 and received letters calling her a “traitor”, wrote Phillip Knightley (2002: 150). “There’s a serious attempt to

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<sup>18</sup> In the United States, state departments and federal agencies withdrew information from their websites they judged too sensitive and US attorney-general John Ashcroft circulated a memorandum urging federal agencies to exercise “extreme caution” in their handling of requests made under the Freedom of Information Act, UNESCO reported. (Marthoz, 2002).



stifle debate,” said Sontag. “The big media have been very intimidated ... who decided no gruesome pictures of the World Trade Centre site were to be published anywhere? I don’t think there was any directive but there was extraordinary consensus, a kind of self-censorship by media executives who concluded these images would be too demoralising for the country.” The perception was created that debate equals dissent and dissent equals a lack of patriotism.<sup>19</sup>

Not all journalists welcomed more control. In response to an avowal by John Ashcroft that the news media would be “kept in the dark” about details of the “war on terror”, veteran reporter Walter Cronkite called for a board to monitor government censorship (Campbell, 2001). This conflict illustrated the supposed cross-purposes of journalists and soldiers in wartime. “The essence of successful warfare is secrecy,” wrote Susan Carruthers. “The essence of successful journalism is publicity” (2000: 157). In opinion polls the public seemed to value successful warfare more highly. CNN found that 72% of respondents had “no problem” with withholding information from the news media (McMasters, 2001); The Pew Research Centre for the People and the Press polled 891 adults and found a 60% support for increased military control over news of the war in Afghanistan (Associated Press, 2001). These agree with earlier polls that suggested that the public were willing to forego the right to know in order to sustain civilian morale and patriotism in the Gulf War. Then, the media were prohibited from filming the flag-draped coffins of U.S. soldiers being unloaded from planes in the United States.<sup>20</sup> “These images clearly did not threaten the safety of U.S. troops, but they did threaten public support for the war” (Croteau, 1999: 113). Support for such restrictions brings into question, Philip Taylor argued (in Taylor, 1998: 161), the “role of journalists as custodians of the public’s right to know.”

In the absence of public pressure to expose material facts about a conflict they might go unreported. In the Gulf, the military routinely refused estimates of Iraqi deaths. The Defence Intelligence Agency was threatened with legal action if it would not risk an estimate. Although Colin Powell, then chair of the joint chiefs of staff, said he was “not terribly interested” in the number of dead Iraqis, the Administration estimated that “in the range of 100 000” people perished (Taylor, 1998: 160).<sup>21</sup> The rationale for that policy, argues Williams (in Belsey, 1992: 159-160), was that “the public will no longer support any war

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<sup>19</sup> The irony of dominant opinion was reflected, like in many crises, in jokes purporting to sum up the national mood in America. Wrote Phillip Knightley in *Index on Censorship* (2002: 152): “An American manages to squeeze four stars and stripes on to his car and drives downtown with them fluttering in the breeze. At the traffic lights, another car pulls alongside. It is flying five flags. The two drivers look at each other’s display of patriotism for a second or so then the driver of the car with the five flags snarls at the other: ‘Get back to Afghanistan, you fucking terrorist’.”

<sup>20</sup> Almost 80% of Americans supported the Pentagon’s restrictions on journalists covering the war while 60% said there should be “more control” (Belsey, 1992: 158). In another American poll, 79% said they favoured censorship (Campbell, 1993: 16), and only 21% of respondents in a BBC survey after the Al-Amiriya massacre in which hundreds of Iraqi civilians perished, approved of images broadcast from the sight of destruction on the grounds that it “undermined British morale” (Carruthers, 2000: 156).



involving a large number of civilian casualties". This, Belsey contends, is a "lesson learned from Vietnam which has become the paradigm for understanding the role of the media in contemporary conflicts."

Refusals by the American military to allow reporters free access to combat areas in the war in Afghanistan made estimates of enemy and civilian deaths all but impossible (Bearak, 2002a; Schmitt, 2002). Although detailed accounts were consistently given for American casualties, Brig. Gen. John W. Rosa Jr., deputy director of current operations for the joint chiefs of staff, told *The New York Times* in Washington that "several hundred" enemy fighters had been killed. Wrote the *Times*: "But he and other officers avoided giving specific numbers because they do not have precise numbers, and, by policy, do not conduct detailed body counts" (Bearak, 2002b). Defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld reportedly opposed the release of numbers even of "combatant" deaths, fearing "echoes from Vietnam 'body counts' – often inflated – that haunted his predecessors", the *Times* reported (Schmitt and Shanker, 2002). Earlier, Human Rights Watch scoffed that the military found the question of civilian deaths "an irritant, and they avoid it". Others did risk estimates, wrote the *Times*:

A few researchers have already done some arithmetic, basing their calculations on various news reports. Prof. Marc W. Herold, an economist at the University of New Hampshire, added up at least 3,767 civilian casualties from Oct. 7 to Dec. 6. Carl Conetta, co-director of the Project on Defence Alternatives, used a more stringent distillation of media accounts and concluded that a better guess would be 1,000 to 1,300 deaths. (Bearak, 2002a).

Herold's calculations suggest that, months before the end of the Afghan war, civilian deaths exceeded that of the attacks on September 11. A failure to put the attacks into perspective by consistently announcing civilian deaths or pursuing estimates hampered the free flow of information, notwithstanding reports of confessions by the US military that it did claim civilian lives in military action, such as after an attack on May 12 in which five peasants died (Gall, 2002).

Editing from portrayals of war accounts of its human cost – on either side of a conflict – may serve dangerously to "divorce death from war in the mediated public consciousness" (Carruthers, 2000: 275). The public and media support for media restrictions suggest that it was systematically difficult to frame the "war against terror" in such a way as to enable society, in whose name the war was waged, to critically examine its progress and outcomes with full knowledge of its human cost. And such knowledge is crucial in responsibly establishing the appropriate limits of warfare, pro-active and re-active.

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<sup>21</sup> Taylor also quotes Brent Scowcroft, George Bush's National Security Advisor, as having said, "Our goal was not to kill people. Our goal was to destroy the Iraqi army" (1998: 179). As a hostile entity, the Iraqi army, if this discourse be allowed, becomes inanimate (other estimates of Iraqi deaths range between 25 000 and 200 000. See Campbell, 1993: 68-9).



“Unless we find ways of representing war that match its causal complexities, its scale, its abstract, functional destructiveness, its remoteness from normal human experience and agency,” writes Peter Loizos (in Allen, 1999: 105), “we are condemned to trivialise it and to glamorise it.”

### 1.5.2. Propaganda

If information were generally value-neutral and objective – contested earlier in this chapter – it would have been anathema to speak of “favourable information”. But already in the Second World War (1939 – 1945), the establishment of “propaganda offices” attested to the need to disseminate precisely such purposive information as but another weapon in the arsenal of modern warfare (Carruthers, 2000: 29). The desire to portray a cause or conflict as justified has to be as old as politics itself, for where rulers hold power at the behest of an electorate, public support for state action is crucial. So, too, is international support – America’s “public diplomacy” (a preferred synonym for propaganda, suggests *The Economist*, 2001) after September 11 was aimed primarily at engaging Muslim opinion and rallying support for the “war on terror” in the West and the Middle East especially, where opposition to attacks on Afghanistan mounted quickly after the first bombing on October 7 (*The Economist*, 2001).

While diplomatic persuasion should not fall within the ambit of a definition of “propaganda”, the clandestine dissemination of “favourable” information – true or false – which might influence views on the justness of America’s “war on terror”, would qualify as propaganda. The revelation by the *New York Times* on February 19, 2001 of a “propaganda office” in the Pentagon initiated a fierce debate about the merits of such endeavours. The *Times* reported not only long-standing “information warfare against hostile nations” by the American military, but exposed the existence of the “Office of Strategic Influence” (OSI) in the Pentagon, created shortly after the September 11 attacks in response to “concerns in the administration that the United States was losing public support overseas for its war on terrorism, particularly in Islamic countries” (Dao and Schmitt, 2002). On the drawing board were plans to “plant news items with foreign media organisations through outside concerns that might not have obvious ties to the Pentagon”, programmes of “disinformation” and “public affairs that rely on truthful news releases”. One of the office’s instruments would be the army’s Psychological Operations Com-



mand (the so-called “psyop” unit), involved in dropping fliers and broadcasting radio programs<sup>22</sup> into Afghanistan encouraging Taliban and Al Qaeda soldiers to surrender, the *Times* said.

A day after the *Times*’s revelation, Donald Rumsfeld denied that the Pentagon was issuing “disinformation” or that the OSI had plans to “place false and deceptive information in the US or foreign press to advance the war effort” (Rumsfeld, 2002). He likened America’s use of “tactical deception” to its policy in World War II to mislead Germany into suspecting a D-Day invasion at Calais and not Normandy. Not once did he use the word “propaganda”. Nevertheless, the OSI was closed after a public outcry and the perception that the office was prepared to lie (Steyn, 2002). On July 29, 2002, the *Times* reported on renewed efforts to counter “growing Anti-American sentiment overseas” by promoting “cross-cultural understanding and to sell America’s policies abroad” (Dao, 2002).

This initiative was not called “propaganda”. But neither was the dominant portrayal of the attacks in the American press. And neither, in the words of Rumsfeld, were the activities of the OSI. If propaganda is aptly described as “that symbolic form of communication ... marshalled to encourage one side in a political or ideological struggle and to discourage another”, as Poynter’s Roy Peter Clark suggests (Clark, 2001), orthodox applications of the definition of propaganda need to be reassessed. For whether it is right or wrong, much of journalistic endeavour after September 11 fits Clark’s definition.

Measures to stifle debate about September 11 notwithstanding, notable commentators in the West attacked dominant views espoused in the American press and elsewhere. These challenges to hegemonic discourse – and a challenge seated in the redefinition of “terror” – is next discussed.

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<sup>22</sup> These broadcasts filled the void after the U.S. bombed the transmitters of Voice of Sharia radio, replacing local broadcasts with “anti-Taliban, pro-US programmes featuring traditional Afghan music, blood-curdling threats to the Taliban and soothing messages to the local populace in Dari and Pashto...” (Callaghan and Jayasekera, 2002). These programmes were broadcast on the same 657, 1107 and 7084v kHz frequency Voice of Sharia had previously used ... US State Department asked the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamid bin Khalifa al-Thani, to use his government’s influence to “soften the reporting stance of ... Al-Jazeera”. The emir refused. Al-Jazeera became a sought-after source of information especially after September 11<sup>th</sup>, as the sole distributor of video-interviews with bin Laden, which were dropped at Al-Jazeera’s offices in Kabul. The US destroyed Al-Jazeera’s Kabul bureau on November 13<sup>th</sup>.



## 2. MANAGING DISSENT

If, in chapter 1, a dominant discourse emerged in the immediate press reaction to the attacks on New York and Washington, as well as testimony to sometimes inadvertent compliance with government demands for restraint, this chapter will show that there were other voices, more critical of America's world role and receptive to explanations for the attacks that did not cast Americans in the role of innocent victims and George W. Bush as "leader of the free world" (as in *Newsweek Extra Edition*, 2001: 32).

Proponents of dissenting views not only challenged assumptions of American innocence, but also portrayals of September 11's aggressors as uncontroversially "evil" by framing America itself as a purveyor of terrorism. The most vociferous critics posited that dissent to the dominant view in government, the public and the media (as explicated above) was stifled by a press prone to patriotism and self-censorship and a government that urged them to "watch what they say". There was, to be sure, significant dissent in America. Demonstrations of opposition to the Afghan war on university campuses (cited by Chomsky, 2001a) and the dismissal of critical journalists (see 1.5.1. *supra*) suggest at least some plurality of opinion, although suppressed. To juxtapose the dominant view with dissenting views, two prominent critics of American foreign policy in general will be taken in this chapter as representatives of a broad – and heterogeneous – stream of thought. They are not representative of the media, although one, John Pilger, is a journalist. They are also not representative of dissent in America – only Noam Chomsky, academic, linguist, philosopher and social critic, hails from the U.S.A. But as prominent critics and recognised dissidents they poignantly point to alternative narrative frames, worthy to be taken cognisance of.

Whereas the dominant framing of the attacks, and of the war that it spawned, became fortified in a media seemingly unwilling to pursue truth at all cost, dissident views point to a domain outside of the dominant frame. Inhabitants of this domain, Pilger and Chomsky among them, challenge the coordinates of and motives behind the dominant, "American" frame. And in that challenge, they question the ethics of the approach followed overwhelmingly in the American media.

The following exposition of their views is followed by a discussion on the aptness of the term "terrorist" in reference to the perpetrators of the September 11 attacks, in the light of critiques both by Pilger and Chomsky. In fashioning definitions to suit ideology, a subtle form of censorship has manifested in the mainstream media. The re-presentation of Americans as terrorists, countering such discourse, was and still is a powerful form of dissent. The use of censorship – including self-censorship – in the ensuing "war on terror" will then be considered and weighed against the media's supposed duty to pursue the truth, and the public's apparent disinterest in such a pursuit.



## 2.1. Questioning the popular frame

### 2.1.1. John Pilger

In articles widely published and controversially received, Pilger<sup>23</sup> questioned the intellectual honesty of portrayals of America as a victim of terrorism. His response to September 11 was not provocative in denying the attacks' atrocity – he spoke of “carnage” and “suffering” in New York (Pilger, 2001a). But it was provocative in its opposition to historically isolated portrayals of the attacks that served a national moral rectitude after what many in Americans perceived to have been unilateral acts of “war”.

Pilger forestalled a simplified sense of victimhood in America by an analysis in the *New Statesman* of “suffering” caused by Western policies in the Middle East. He overthrew the pervasive American monopoly on the damning use of the word “terrorism” by conferring on America the title of the “greatest source of terrorism on earth”. This is complemented with an exposition of American atrocities in the Middle East and the argument that Arab animosity is the result of a morally corrupt foreign policy and especially the suffering of Palestinians at the hand of American-sponsored Israel.<sup>24</sup>

“Far from being the terrorists of the world,” he argued, “the Islamic peoples have been its victims – that is, the victims of American fundamentalism, whose power, in all its forms, military, strategic and economic, is the greatest source of terrorism on earth.” That the West is unlikely to condone such use of the word “terrorism” does not surprise Pilger, as he believes that the mainstream media consistently fail to convey the suffering caused by Western policies. He notes that on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2001, eight people were killed in southern Iraq when British and American planes bombed civilian areas, but this went largely unreported. In what he succinctly and controversially terms “the slaughter known as the Gulf war”<sup>25</sup> an estimated 200 000 Iraqis died, according to the Health Education Trust, and a further million civilians, half of them children, have since perished in Iraq because of sanctions imposed by the West.

The imposition of such historical contexts force alternative interpretations on key events in the American consciousness of the past decades, including 11 September.

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<sup>23</sup> John Pilger is a seasoned war correspondent (working in Vietnam, Cambodia, Egypt, India, Bangladesh and Biafra), television and radio journalist and contributor to publications as diverse as *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *New Statesman*, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *The Nation* in New York. He is an outspoken critic of dominant Western ideology and political thinking. See <http://pilger.carlton.com/home/biography>

<sup>24</sup> Arab hatred of America is widely attributed to America's policies in the region, as the London-based *The Economist* argued in an article about failed peace initiatives in Palestine: “The Arab world's anti-Americanism [drew] vitality from the assumption that the United States, its interest in the Middle East limited to oil and Iraq, supports Israel in its occupation of Palestinian land”. (*The Economist*, 2002a)

<sup>25</sup> Richard Keeble (in Kieran, 1998: 66) also asks whether the Gulf War in 1990-1 should not instead have been construed as a series of massacres “in the absence of a viable enemy”, pointing again to the possibilities of reality-construction if one defines critical moments in the history of conflict differently.



The very Taliban government President George W. Bush decided to attack three weeks after the writing of Pilger's article, was a creation of America's Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) after its war in cohorts with the Afghan mujahidin against the Soviets in the 1980s (cited in Baxter et al., 2001: 104). Indeed, after commencing covert aid to the Afghan mujahidin in 1979, America provided via Pakistan "overt aid on a massive scale" from 1986 (Marsden, 2001: 28) to the Islamist fighters who would later build training camps from which Al Qaeda would presumably operate and who ruled Afghanistan as the Taliban from 1996 to November 2001. This raises legitimate questions about an American foreign policy unmoved by consistent concerns over democracy and human rights and steered, instead, by medium term interests such as removing a Soviet-sponsored Afghan government at the height of the Cold War. It also engenders suspicions that America's war in Afghanistan may be less about a concern for "democracy" and "freedom", as George W. Bush asks the world to believe, and more about the strategic importance of Afghanistan in the distribution network of oil in the Middle East, Pilger suggests. Such insinuations, although they may not carelessly be made, are vital for the sustenance of healthy public debate, unimpeded by narrowly construed ideas about the "national interest".

By plunging headlong into the conflicts of the Middle-East in a piece on September 11, Pilger (2001a) necessitates the question whether these very conflicts – in which America partakes as ally of Israel – lie perhaps at the root of the attacks on America. Bar the references to the Gulf war, he focuses almost exclusively on Palestinian suffering in the *New Statesman* article, forcing a contextualisation of America's woes and relegating the search for explanations of the causes thereof from the exclusive domain of the "evil" other to the self-conscious sphere of the self, now also implicated in wrongdoing.

Unusual references to phenomena such as "American fundamentalism" challenge the view that America's style of democracy and approach to religion is the proper standard. Instead, it implicitly transfers the pejorative connotations of "Islamic fundamentalism" onto the widely accepted American norm. It suggests that, if the facts about suffering in the Middle-East were more widely known, and journalists were consistent in their application of similar words to similar things, America would long ago have been denounced as "terrorist" itself. But politicians, too, ignore this fact, says Pilger. "That Tony Blair, whose government sells lethal weapons to Israel and has sprayed Iraq and Yugoslavia with cluster bombs and depleted uranium ... can be taken seriously when he now speaks about the 'shame' of the 'new evil of mass terrorism' says much about the censorship of our collective sense of how the world is managed. One of Blair's favourite words – fatuous – comes to mind. Alas, it is no comfort to the families of thousands of Americans who have died so terribly that the perpetrators of their suffering may be the product of western policies" (2001a: 11).

In two articles (2001b and 2001c) published after the October launch of attacks in Afghanistan, Pilger persists in challenging dominant views on justice and "framing". He details the "cruelty" of the use of



cluster bombs in the Afghan war, deeming them weapons “designed specifically for acts of terrorism” (2001b). He draws parallels between the killing of innocent civilians by America in Afghanistan and the killing of innocent civilians on September 11<sup>th</sup>. These acts of killing were equally unjustified, he insists.

By comparing the death toll of about 3000 in the World Trade Centre attacks to the similar number of Iraqi infants who die every month because of the United Nations’ “genocidal blockade ... on the suffering people of Iraq”, Pilger does not so much diminish the atrocity on September 11<sup>th</sup> as he demands a condemnation of the concomitant suffering in Iraq in proportion to its magnitude.

He would later question celebrations marking the “conquest” of Kabul on 13 November 2001 (Baxter et al, 2001: 10), challenging the framing of the Northern Alliance as liberators in the light of their supposed cruelty and murder of “an estimated 50,000 people” in four years of “internecine feuding” before the Taliban conquest in 1996. Therefore America has never fought a “war against terror”, but substituted “bad terrorists” for “good terrorists” instead. “What this false victory has demonstrated,” Pilger concludes (2001c), “is that, to those in power in Washington and London, certain human lives have greater worth than others and that the killing of only one set of civilians is a crime. If we accept that, we beckon the repetition of atrocities on all sides, again and again.”

### 2.1.2. *Noam Chomsky*

“The new millennium began with two monstrous crimes: the terrorist attacks of 11 September and the reaction to them, surely taking a far greater toll of innocent lives” (Chomsky, 2001).

Deconstructing the established binary oppositions in public discourse is a favoured activity of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) professor of linguistics whom the London *Independent* newspapers hails as one of the greatest living philosophers (Powell, 2001). In Noam Chomsky, John Pilger finds an ardent academic ally in his attempts to confuse the dominant view.

If dominant discourse dictated after September 11 that a terrorist is necessarily a foreign “other”, Chomsky shares with Pilger the belief that although the attacks were “historical events” because of their targets and the immediacy of their considerable death toll, the crimes which they constituted were “far from unusual in the annals of violence that falls short of war” (Chomsky, 2002: 24).

Just as Pilger blamed a silent mainstream media for much of Western ignorance of foreign parallels to their own suffering, Chomsky lambasted the media for not reporting on the humanitarian toll of the Afghan war. He cites the large-scale disruption of food aid to Afghans after the October attacks and the disruption, likewise, of the planting that provides 80% of the country’s grain supplies by the subsequent war, according to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO). Air strikes



further turned cities into “ghost towns”, the press reported, and destroyed power and water supplies in what Chomsky calls “a form of biological warfare”, drawing on Western fears of such attacks.

He referred to the Afghan war as a “silent genocide” and to the damage of unexploded US ordnance as “torture”, but fears the “fate of these miserable people will never be known, or even investigated, if past precedents are a guide”. Chomsky posits that Afghans are regarded in the West merely as an “uncivilised tribe”, echoing Winston Churchill’s “contemptuous reference to Afghans and Kurds ... 80 years ago”, and he deems their fate in the “war against terror” to be “conventional” (2002: 26). Chomsky argued in *Index on Censorship* as in Powell’s *Washington Post* piece that the Afghan war is a “terrorist war” instead, but not framed that way. “In practice, terrorism is the violence that *they* commit against *us* – whoever we happen to be. It would be hard to find a historical exception.”

Fashioning his own exception, Chomsky cast America as the world’s leading purveyor of “state terrorism” and Osama bin Laden as the “foremost private practitioner” (cited in Powell, 2001: 13). The book in which he argues that the war in Afghanistan is morally and legally “appalling” and an act of “state terrorism”, *9-11*, sold 160 000 copies in its first weeks, said the *Post*. Still, Chomsky is “ignored by the Mafia that controls America’s op-ed pages,” according to the editor of the *Los Angeles Times* book review, Steve Wasserman. Is this because he considers US intellectuals a “lap-dog class, scampering forth to bark on command of their masters”, and disagreements among them as minimal – “at the level of statistical error”? It might be because he fearlessly draws analogies between American and Nazi attempts “to rationalise state violence in pursuit of international aims”, which the *Post* ascribes to him.

Like Pilger, Chomsky frustrates clear opposition between US “good” and Taliban “evil” in citing that America had armed and trained many of these “fundamentalists”. Although he has always described the September 11 attacks as an atrocity, he believes them to “pale next to the West’s ‘deep-seated culture of terrorism’.” Although Chomsky and Pilger both attempt to bring to light salient but secret information on current affairs, specifically about the attacks and its aftermath, their foremost feat is the exposure of a stifled discourse about the war in which America cannot but be framed as innocent.

Thus they challenge received wisdom about the definition of “terrorism” and “fundamentalism” and the applicability of descriptors such as “slaughter” and “genocide” only to acts by foreigners and foes. In such a counter-discourse, it would seem absurd to propagate a narrative of American innocence (chapter 1), suggest parallels between the West’s “just war” (World War II) and the “war against terror” and intimate that, on September 11, “freedom” was attacked. Instead, America is a “purveyor” of terrorism and instigator of a “slaughter” in Iraq – framed as a war.



Such a framing prevents a response of moral certitude to September 11. If such an interpretation were pervasive, the primary reaction to the attacks might have been a critical examination of American foreign policy, acknowledging that it might have played a role in fomenting hatred towards Americans. It would also have shifted the logical origin of the conflict beyond September 11 to acts preceding it, thereby forcing a more nuanced framing of aggressor and victim in the understanding that these terms depend for its verity on the perspective of the speaker.

In the act itself of redefining terms such as “terrorism” lies one of the most poignant forms of dissent to an orthodox interpretation of September 11. In the next section, therefore, the justness of a debate about the meaning of this term and examples of its application after September 11 will be considered.

## **2.2. ‘Terror’ defined**

The purpose of considering the debate on the definition of “terrorism” is to evaluate whether its pervasive use in the American media, as outlined in chapter 1, was legitimate. If it can be shown that the word is necessarily subjective – as language theory suggests – but applied only to non-Americans in the American press, its use supports the argument not only that an unashamedly pro-American view permeated initial reportage on the September 11 attacks, but that the language used in the press delineated “terrorism” in such a way that it could not be used outside of the dominant frame. A monopoly on the definition of terrorism censures alternative interpretations of the order of events before and after September 11, infusing only the acts of others with suggestions of aggression and the acts of the self with an implicit innocence. Reserving a word such as terrorism only for one group constrains free expression, shaping “innocent” descriptions into acts of covert censorship.

The debate on definitions is therefore placed amid a discussion of censorship, attesting to its pervasive influence on what is said and what is not said in the so-called “war against terror”. I will firstly show that the meaning of the word “terror” has been rigorously debated for decades. Language theory, and this debate, suggest that the word is not value-neutral. Its reservation in the American press for “foreign aggressors” suggests a double standard in applying the word, for it has been argued that America itself has committed “terror”, and the current use of the word admits to no such ambivalence. The use of “terrorism”, moreover, has consequences for the way in which those implicated by it are legally classified, just as definitions in times of war often determine the propriety of military action. This discussion precedes the exposition in chapter 3 of orthodox journalistic values espousing impartiality and a new wave that permits precisely the kind of “fashionable bias” that I contend informed the use of the word “terrorism” in the American press.



### 2.2.1. Elusive consensus

While it is easy, based on its pervasive use in the American press (see chart 1), to assume that “terrorism” denotes but one, “objectively” definable action, consensus on the precise meaning of the word has been so elusive since its first use in the French Revolution (Sammonds, 2002: 8) that it is generally accepted today that its exact application depends on who uses it, and when. Groups that would warrant, in “Western” eyes, the label of “terrorist”, might prefer, for instance, to call themselves “freedom fighters” or “guerrillas”,<sup>26</sup> and actually be perceived as heroes in another community (Reynolds in Baxter et al., 2001: 93). The applicability of the word might moreover wane as political milieus transform. In the Irish struggle for independence from Britain in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, independence fighters were labelled “terrorists” but later revered by communities as heroes of that country’s independence struggle (Keane in Baxter et al., 2001: 53), as was arguably the case with independence movements like South Africa’s African National Congress, long labelled “terrorist”, now democratic rulers.

So diverse have been interpretations of the word, especially in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when terrorism was regarded by some as a “political growth industry” (Horovitz in Schmid, 1983: ix), that Alex Schmid collected 109 definitions of “terrorism” in his encyclopaedic research guide *Political Terrorism* in 1983 (Schmid, 1983: ix). In its foreword, Irving Horovitz of Rutgers University intimated that, when the word is “probed with care,” one becomes “painfully aware of its manifold forms, sizes and shapes”. J. Bowyer Bell remarked: “The academic response to terrorism has been ahistorical, exaggerated, and closely associated with congenial political postures. There is no consensus on the bounds of terrorism: some observers define as terrorism nearly every act of disruptive violence and ignore violence by established regimes; some scholars want psychopaths and criminals to be examined and others do not; and there are those who, defending a cherished cause, deny that their patriots are terrorists ... No one has a definition of terrorism...” (Schmid, 1983: 2). Still, many have been advanced. Schmid’s 109 include –

- “Terrorism is a method of action by which an agent tends to produce terror in order to impose his domination” (Waciorski, 1939, in Schmid, 1983: 119)
- “...The threat or the use of violence for political ends” (Crozier, 1960, in Schmid, 1983: 120)
- “Terror is usually defined as a period characterised by political executions, as during revolution, especially such a period (also called the ‘Reign of Terror’) during the French Revolution (from May

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<sup>26</sup> Vorster (1984: 12) states that some groups prefer to refer to themselves as “freedom fighters” or “guerrillas” to escape the “negative connotations” of the word “terrorism”. “The choice of terms used to describe acts of terror with a political objective, can be important for the way in which the public interprets events ... The description of a movement as ‘terrorist’ can colour it negatively, while ‘guerrilla’ lends it a degree of legitimacy.”



1793 to 1794). But sociologically, it is a person or thing or practice that causes intense fear and suffering, whose aim is to intimidate, subjugate, especially as a political weapon or policy..." (Roucek, 1962, in Schmid, 1983: 121)

- "A strategy of unlawful violence calculated to inspire terror in the general public or a significant segment thereof in order to achieve a power-outcome or to propagandise a particular claim or grievance" (Bassiouni, 1979, in Schmid, 1983: 144).<sup>27</sup>

Amid this plethora of definitions, September 11 spawned a new wave, many legally enacted. Some of these, such as that proposed in Britain's 2000 Terrorism Act (Sammonds, 2002: 9), were severely attacked by human rights lawyers and NGOs such as Amnesty International that derided it as "vaguely worded and open to subjective interpretation". The UK definition might even include the actions of protesters against genetically modified crops or those who disrupt computer systems. Moreover, it shifts the burden of proof of innocence to the suspect.

Such a confused narrative environment did not impede the unanimous interpretation of "terrorism" as an exclusively foreign act in the American press nor unanimity that the attacks constituted "terrorism". That respected newspapers such as the *Washington Post* ("Terrorists Hijack 4 Airliners, Destroy World Trade Centre, Hit Pentagon; Hundreds Dead"), *Los Angeles Times* ("Terrorists attack News York, Pentagon") and *Wall Street Journal*. ("Terrorists Destroy World Trade Centre, Hit Pentagon in Raid with Hijacked Jets") labelled the attacks and attackers "terrorist", suggests a dominant understanding of the word. The 19 men later identified as those who hijacked the four aeroplanes were labelled "terrorists" *a posteriori*, after the act, because their actions induced terror<sup>28</sup> – a seemingly appropriate application of the current standard definition of a "terrorist" as a "person who uses or favours violent and intimidating methods of coercing a government or community" (*Oxford Concise Dictionary*).

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<sup>27</sup> A recent definition of terrorism is proposed in Alexander, 1990: ix: Terrorism is "a process of deliberate employment of psychological intimidation and physical violence by sovereign states and subnational groups to attain strategic and political objections in violation of law". Lord Chalfont defines it so in the same book: "Terrorism is the deliberate, systematic murder, maiming, or menacing of the innocent to inspire fear in order to gain political ends" (1990: 13). It furthermore "idealises violence", "promotes totalitarianism" instead of democracy and is a "substitute for the political process".

<sup>28</sup> Seven newspapers used only the word "terror" in large type in their main headline: *The Daily Titan*, California State University, Fullerton, p. 6; *Orlando Sentinel, Extra*, p. 26; *The Des Moines Register, Extra*, Iowa, p. 38; *Asbury Park Press, Extra*, p. 65; *The Charlotte Observer, Extra*, Charlotte, North Carolina, p. 75; *Daily Press, Extra*, Newport News, Virginia, p. 109, and the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Extra*, Wisconsin, p. 119. "Day of Terror" appeared in the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin, Extra*, p. 31; *The Times*, Munster, Indiana, p. 36; *News & Record, Extra*, Greensboro, Northern Carolina, p. 76; *The Oregonian*, Portland, Oregon, p. 85, and *The Tennessean*, Nashville, p. 98. One paper each used "Terror Strikes" (*Missoulian*, Montana, p. 63), "Reign of Terror" (*The Boston Globe, Extra*, Massachusetts, p. 49) and "Morning of Terror" (*Daily Kent Stater*, Ohio, p. 81). Other examples of the rampant use of variations on the word "terror", include "Terrorized" (*The Beaumont Enterprise*, Texas, p. 101, and the St. Paul, Minnesota, *Pioneer Press*, p. 57),



### 2.2.2. *Pejorative value*

Rife dissent over its definition shows that groups prefer not to be tainted by the label “terrorist”, already suggesting that any intimation of an “objective” definition is naïve. A pejorative word, “terrorism” cannot be value-free, not least because it is a linguistic signification. As shown in chapter 1, language imposes a “structure of values, social and economic in origin, on whatever is represented” (Fowler, 1991: 4). Schmid acknowledges, as Chomsky and Pilger implicitly argue when they purposely apply “terrorism” to American actions, that “the question of definition ... cannot be detached from the question of who is the defining agency.” Jennifer Hocking writes: “Replete with implied moral opprobrium, a socially assigned value and meaning, an imputation of illegitimacy and outrage, ‘terrorism’ can never fit the apparently value-neutral typologies much used in the social sciences” (Carruthers, 2000: 163).

When the language tool, in this case the word “terrorism”, signifies, furthermore, an act that is not morally neutral, its definition is bound to become the focus of an ideological tug-of-war. After September 11, Islamic diplomats gathered for a summit in Malaysia questioned the dominant definition of “terrorism” on the grounds that “hundreds of countries gained liberation from occupation through armed struggle or other means and no one described such struggles as ‘terrorist campaigns’ before September 11” (*Kuala Lumpur Bernama*, 2002). They bemoaned the implicit symmetry that the Western media afforded the words “Islamic” and “terrorism” and urged the United Nations to ban the use of “stereotype racial expressions<sup>29</sup> in the local and international media”.<sup>30</sup>

One prominent media outlet in Britain, albeit not a newspaper, had already reconsidered its use of the word “terrorism” before the April conference in Kuala Lumpur. On November 15, 2001, *The Guardian* reported that the BBC had taken a “policy decision not to describe the attacks on the US as ‘terrorism’ ... [lest] the service [loses] its reputation for impartiality around the world if it were seen to use such a subjective term” (Wells, 2001). The BBC’s decision was based precisely on the assumption that not all people understand “terrorism” in the same way. “However appalling and disgusting it was, there will nevertheless be a constituency of our listeners who don’t regard it (the attacks) as terrorism. Describing it as such could downgrade our status as an impartial and independent broadcaster,” said Mark Damazer, the BBC’s deputy director of news. The BBC would use the word “attack” instead in recognition that the attacks may be differently viewed from an “international perspective”.

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<sup>29</sup> On the use of stereotypes, Walter Lippmann wrote lucidly: “There is economy in this. For the attempt to see all things freshly and in detail, rather than as types and generalities, is exhausting, and among busy affairs practically out of the question ... What matters is the character of the stereotypes, and the gullibility with which we employ them. And these in the end depend upon those inclusive patterns which constitute our philosophy of life” (cited in Cohen, 1992: 163).

<sup>30</sup> In the Gulf War, the Arab League Council complained about an “unjust, hostile and tendentious media campaign against Iraq” (Taylor, 1998: 164).



Such a decision might also be informed by the ideal of consistency in language use. A journalist would presumably not want to be forced to refer to sanctioned Western responses to terrorism as “terrorism” itself just because they share certain attributes, such as the killing of civilians that was common both to the attacks on September 11 and the war in Afghanistan. An American pressure group condemned a Minneapolis newspaper after the attacks for presumed “double standards” in the use of the word “terrorism” (FAIR, April 2002). The *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* had referred to the September 11 attacks as “terrorism” because members of Al-Qaeda had been convicted of “terrorist” activities in America, but not to aggressors in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as “terrorists”. The *Tribune* defended its approach by defining Al-Qaeda as a “nongovernmental group” carrying out attacks on civilians – which it supposed distinguished it from parties to the Palestine feud. The media watchdog FAIR that aired the pressure group’s complaints, reserved, however, harsh criticism for the group itself, after it admitted it would not call the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima “terrorism” although countless more civilians were killed than in the September attacks, because the bomb was dropped to combat an “evil force”.

Whether an action is defined as “terrorism” depends undeniably on the perspective from which it is defined, as the above examples show. Defining the acts of September 11 as “terrorism”, which most newspapers did, defines the actions of the attackers on that day as an illegitimate use of force. The BBC World Service poses a notable antithesis to the approach of the American press, in that it acknowledges that the same event can be described differently from different perspectives.

This does not suppose, however, that the event cannot accurately be described. It merely admits a vantage point. Just as the impossibility of achieving complete “objectivity” in reporting (as shown in chapter 1) does not render the search for truth obsolete, so too does difficulty in defining “terrorism” not make the concept dispensable, writes Paul Wilkinson (Alexander, 1990: 26). The same can be said of other disputes over terms such as democracy, imperialism and revolution, “because a sufficient common understanding of the meaning of these terms makes them useful, indeed essential, in scholarly discourse and political debate.” Usage of any term, however, has consequences, as I will briefly argue below. And usage remains ever vulnerable to critical evaluation, which, if it does not negate the term “terrorism” altogether, necessitates consistency in its application, as will be argued in chapter 3.

### 2.2.3. ‘Deadly wordplay’

If the definition of the word “terrorism” is not cast in stone nor value-free, as contended above, then the choice to use the word betrays a value judgement. If the word itself cannot be avoided – for if “terror” exists, and it does, there has to be “terrorists”, too – then the user has to take cognisance of the values, judgements and possible consequences incidental to its use.



This intimation begs the media not only to be careful and consistent when labelling someone a “terrorist”, but forces an appreciation that the label does not leave the labelled unscathed.

Whereas some celebrated the attacks on New York and Washington (*Newsweek Extra Edition*, 2001: 46) and cast Osama bin Laden as hero, not villain, supposed accomplices of the men who hijacked the planes on September 11 were soon being categorised by America as “enemy combatants” – with severe consequences. These “suspects” in America’s “war against terror” – which numbered 2,700 a year after the attacks (*Time*, 2002: 16) – were incarcerated at a strictly guarded military facility in Cuba. Their classification as “enemy combatants” purported to place regulations about their trial and treatment beyond the reach of the Geneva convention, and was fiercely criticised by human rights groups and the former chief war crimes prosecutor for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, justice Richard Goldstone, now heading an international task group on terror that aims to articulate ways for protecting national security without compromising civil rights. Goldstone denounced America’s refusal to classify the prisoners in Guantanamo Bay as “prisoners of war”, albeit mainly because he deems such power of classification to lie elsewhere and not with the American military (cited in Schneider, 2001). The classification, nonetheless, shapes not only perceptions about people but also their subsequent fate – it affects and creates, not merely reflects.

It also ranks and categorises people according to their liability to become targets for military action. In a war in Afghanistan which clearly purported to root out the “terrorist” network Al-Qaeda and the Taliban which gave them succour, the lack of statistics on Afghan civilian casualties (cited above) is not the only indication that the line between combatant and civilian was sometimes arbitrarily drawn.

It first needs to be acknowledged that the line is indeed *drawn* and does not exist *a priori*. It is easy for someone who might consider herself a civilian to become a “combatant” in the eyes of an enemy who deems her a legitimate target notwithstanding prior “classification”. Classificatory lines in war, delineating definitions of “legitimate” and “illegitimate” targets and so determining who might be hit with a missile, for example, can also be re-drawn in the heat of battle: Priest (2002) avers this happened in Afghanistan. In an article in the *International Herald-Tribune*, Priest details the decision-making process of an American Special Forces Team on bombing raids over Afghanistan.

It constituted, in the words of a participant soldier, a “terminology game”. He told his unit, eager to hit but careful only to hit “legitimate targets”: “Yes, it is a civilian village, mud hut, like everything else in this country. But don’t say that. Say it’s a military compound. It’s a built-up area, barracks, command and control. Just like with the convoys – if it really was a convoy with civilian vehicles they were using for transport, we would just say, ‘Hey, military convoy, troop transport’ “ (Priest, 2002).



This illustrates nothing directly about the media. But it shows how definitions can create a reality in which the very same action can be either permitted or forbidden. It shows, thereby, the confluence of reflection and affection in a way that urges responsible media reports, for they help fashion definitions. Through inconsistent use of terms such as “terrorist”, the media blurs the legitimate boundaries of meaning to suit nationalist ends. The American press did just that by failing to ask whether Americans themselves might not also be reasonable deemed “terrorists”, as Chomsky and Pilger argue.

Perceptions about the enemy shape actions aimed at the enemy. If an enemy is “relentlessly demonised”, as were the British in the mind of the journalist Fergal Keane as child in Northern Ireland, they are easily disposed of: “The version of history I was handed down emphasised the manly and honourable nature of our warriors, and relentlessly demonised the British. It was nonsense. But the adherence to this myth enabled men to kill without mercy and to justify their actions to future generations” (Baxter et al., 2001: 53). Likewise, Islamic groups expressed fears after September 11 that the media’s portrayals of Islamists and terrorists would invite accusations of “terrorism” on to innocent Muslims. Iranian journalists feared that “terrorist” would be “narrowly defined as anyone who posed a threat to the West or Israel, with everyone else fair game” (Mobassar, 2002: 156).

And at an extraordinary session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers on Terrorism held in Kuala Lumpur in April, dr. Abdulouahed Belkezis expressed fear that the September 11 attacks would be “used as a pretext to spread terror, fear, intimidation and coercion in international relations at an unprecedented scale never known in modern history” (*Kuala Lumpur Bernama*, 2002).

Wilkinson avers that the term “terrorism” is much too often conceptually problematised, as done here, and that some have “tried to deny that any common usage exists as a device for obstructing co-operation in policies to combat terrorism” (in Alexander, 1990: 26). As stated, this is not the intention here. In the admitted absence of a single, ultimately true or correct definition, there is nevertheless a consensus definition (see Schmidt in Alexander et al, 1990: 27). The necessary ingredient seems to be “coercive intimidation”. The meaning of “terrorism”, as argued, depends much on who uses it, but is not reducible only to use. Matthew Kieran writes: “Meaning is not straightforwardly reducible to use. For we can misuse and misinterpret the meaning of something, whether because we lack an understanding of the appropriate context or because we misunderstand the publicly governed rules which determine how a concept or term ought to be applied” (Kieran, 1998: 29).

Indeed, there are atrocities committed against civilian populations that “indisputably come within the definition of terrorism”, as the *Index on Censorship* pointed out. “But definitions are self-serving, and double standards protect the terrorist state” (*Index on Censorship*, 2002: 16). Double standards are evident in the framing of terrorism against the West as a foremost abuse of human rights, while defen-



ding similar actions by Western nations by using friendlier descriptors. By framing terrorism as the “ultimate abuse of human rights,” the abuse of human rights often concomitant with wars on terrorism is reduced to merely the lesser of two evils, and therefore tolerable.<sup>31</sup>

It is not suggested that the *Washington Post* or any American newspaper erred in describing the acts of September 11 as “terrorist”. They were evidently so. But applying consistent standards for its use will anticipate and answer the complaint that “terrorist” is merely another word for the enemy, from whichever perspective. As in propaganda, politically motivated definitions tend to obscure other semantic possibilities that may be less sympathetic to a dominating cause. After World War II the historian John Dower argued that the deception of propaganda in wartime lies not mainly in false claims of enemy atrocities, as were widely publicised in later wars and in the Gulf, “but in the pious depiction of such behaviour as peculiar to the other side” (cited in Campbell, 1993: 79). The same can be said for the dominant definition of “terrorism” in the American press after September 11.

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<sup>31</sup> During the Reagan administration, the mainstream media duplicated, writes Carruthers, “the state’s own (highly partial) allocation of labels, ‘in such a way as to associate an identification of ‘terrorist’ practice exclusively with the foreign other, and correspondingly to the self (and allies) with the identity of a victim of terrorism ... Playing on a sense of American victimhood, sensational, high-profile reporting of terrorism also served (in the 1980’s) to build consensus ... for ... extraordinary counter-terrorism measures, which might have been questioned had the enemy not seemed both so threatening and so impervious to less forceful treatment.” (2000: 193).



### 3. PARTISAN FRAMING

Amid urgent crisis and looming deadlines thousands of journalists around the world compiled a myriad accounts of the attacks on September 11 for the next day's newspaper. In America – the nation on a near war footing – some papers were vocal in their vilification of the attackers, almost unanimously labelling them “terrorists”. “Bastards!” barked the *San Francisco Examiner* (see Addendum M). Others employed much restraint – the *New York Times* would later earn seven Pulitzer prizes for its coverage of the attacks and its aftermath, introduced on September 12 with a cautious “U.S. Attacked”.

Although there were critics, among them Pilger and Chomsky, who expressed different views, the newspapers and magazines examined here were generally sympathetic to America in its assignment of roles in the conflict (the U.S. as victim, not villain), its reaction to the aggression (“Unthinkable!” not “we told you this might happen”) and its acceptance of its own role as fiercely American institutions (“We Mourn”, said the *Washington Sun*; “One Nation ... Indivisible”, *The Daily Mississippian*). The press indulged in pregnant analogies to previous violent attacks such as at Pearl Harbor in 1941 and subsequent American victories such as Iwo Jima near the end of World War II.

In these framings of the attacks, and amid suggestions that alternatives would not gladly be tolerated, the press emerged as more than mere spectators of an amoral event. The attacks were condemned and labelled acts of war – without quotation marks. Victims were honoured and suspects lined up by the media, echoing the American president. And when the reciprocal war broke, media doves were criticised as “unpatriotic” and self-censorship was imposed with a public mandate (Scott, 2002: 9).

The result was a framing highly partisan to American interests and values. Assuming (and showing) that orthodox media ethics demand impartiality and “objectivity” instead, this last chapter will examine and evaluate the apparent shift towards greater partisanship in the media, tolerance of “patriotic” journalism and demands for a different role for journalists in the resolution of conflict.

#### 3.1. Impartiality and changing ethics

Stemming from its perceived role as an unofficial fourth branch of government, the press in America – and in democratic societies elsewhere – is traditionally seen as an additional Constitutional system of checks and balances, a counterweight to and guardian of government power (Rosen, 1999: 283). This role nurtured an adversarial press that values aggressive questioning and scrutiny of public affairs.

Although deeply involved in public affairs, the watchdog-press has had to defend its integrity and ability to be critical by remaining independent from the institutions of democracy it guards. “It is a common-



place assumption in journalism,” writes Matthew Kieran (1998: 22), “that the media have a fundamental duty to be impartial in order to achieve the goal of an objective report or analysis of events ... arising from conceiving of the media as an unofficial fourth estate.” The prioritisation of impartiality aims primarily to protect the ability to pursue the truth independently. According to orthodox ethics, such independence can only be achieved by a press that remains uninvolved in that on which it reports. For this reason Black et al. include in their “Guiding principles for the journalist” the responsibility to “act independently” so as to “seek the truth and report it as fully as possible ... without being unduly influenced by those who would use their power or position counter to the public interest” (1995: 2, 17). The Society of Professional Journalists also bids its members maintain “accuracy and objectivity” in pursuit of “truth ... our ultimate goal” (Black et al, 1995: 7). Several other American media institutions list “objectivity” and the avoidance of bias as core principles (Black et al, 1995: 9, 20, and 22).

From this assumed distance between story-teller and story subject evolved perhaps the common doctrine in most journalistic circles to define journalists merely as “observers, chroniclers and interpreters of events” (Botes, 1998: 5). But changing notions about “objectivity” suggesting the inability of journalists merely to reflect on society without changing it (chapter 1) and the realisation that news reports are always social constructions, themselves constitutive of the reality they purport to reflect, have brought the mirror analogy in disrepute and forced a different view of the media’s role in society.

This is no new phenomenon, and is intertwined with several factors.

The realisation that the language of news journalism is more affective than reflective has induced the demise of the reflective model. Affecting brings the concomitant responsibility, argues Martin Bell (in Kieran, 1998: 19), of knowing not only what difference reporting makes, but also to be informed by an idea of right and wrong. Thus journalism becomes a “moral enterprise” that – unable to remain aloof of and wholly objective about “reality” – embraces the responsibility to judge and influence for the good.

Although most would still argue, says Botes (1998: 6), that doing anything more than reporting on parties’ positions, or the ‘facts’, as the parties see it, is taking on a non-journalistic task and stepping out of role, this role-definition is “far too limited”. “The idea that journalists are simply neutral channels of information has ... been challenged by the notion of journalists as active participants in nearly all forms of social interaction” (Shoemaker and Reese in Botes, 1998: 5). Botes, a journalist and conflict resolution theorist, sees in journalists roles parallel to that of conflict resolvers. This goes hand in hand with the emergence of the phenomenon of public journalism, which affords journalists much more active roles of “participation, conversation, taking responsibility and co-operative problem solving”, as Rosen (1997: 14) points out.



The shift towards a more involved journalism has also brought calls for journalists to acknowledge the “horizons” (Edgar in Belsey, 1992: 122) or prejudices which permeate their practise not by choice but of necessity. This realisation, if endorsed, makes it impossible for journalists to be just “amused bystanders”, Rosen argues. “Different times call for different journalisms – different replies to the standing question, what are journalists for? Journalists not only tell us about the world, they are part of the structure that holds it up. For if their accounts prove trustworthy, the entire society can trust that its affairs are being brought into public view, made part of a consultable record” (1999: 283).

Indeed, the American media were all but “amused bystanders” of the September attacks. It employed, instead, a “selective impartiality” reminiscent of that of the 1970s BBC. In 1971 the British minister for broadcasting, Christopher Chataway, said the BBC’s editorial judgements should be exercised “within the context of the values and objectives of the society they are there to serve” (Carruthers, 2000: 180). The BBC espoused a “selective impartiality”, aiming to remain impartial between government and the political opposition at home, but not between the UK and its enemies. After the Gulf War, a report of the then Gannett Foundation remarked that “covering war is unlike covering anything else, and it leads inevitably toward nationalistic accounts. Historically, the consequence of such coverage is cheer-leading rather than critical analysis” (see Gannett, 1991: 2). Likewise, journalists in America largely threw their weight behind the war effort in Afghanistan and did not waver in its patriotism after 9-11, thus purporting to support the “society they are there to serve”. This is not an impartiality that demands “symmetrical” coverage of the acts of “terrorists” and the West, because “terrorists” are the “enemy”.

Carruthers (2000: 175) has documented complaints of politicians who say the media treats terrorists and politicians “symmetrically” without recognising their fundamentally different status in a democracy. Also, in *Terrorism and the media*, Hermon argues (in Alexander, 1990: 41) that police, who serve a democratic state, should not be treated in the same way as terrorists. “This independence (of media and police) is right and healthy. Nevertheless, both are part of the same democratic process and belief, and the basis for any discussion is the fact that they both should and indeed must have a commitment to its preservation”. Although no spokesperson for the press, CNN’s Judy Woodruff told the journal *Press/Politics* that journalists are “human” and should not remain neutral in conflict situations such as on September 11. “We are human, we do have judgements, and we should have judgements. I think there are some things that are so obvious, what happened on September 11 was wrong, it was terribly wrong ... There are many questions we could be asking of the conduct of this war (in Afghanistan), but on the basics, we can agree, it was a terrible thing that happened” (Jones, 2002: 7).

It was precisely this consensus that spawned framings of the attacks as “unthinkable”, an “outrage” and a “new day of infamy” – framings indicative of journalism that judges and comments from within society and not from a lofty distance; that relates fundamentally to the suffering of American people



without feigning ambivalence and impartiality. This framing approach after September 11 showed that the American press responded to an apparent need among the American people for a different *kind* of news media than in less distressing times. The “people” approved of media restrictions; the newspapers of the “people” – often frank pointers to the pervasive mood – rallied behind the idea of the American nation, its innocence in the world, and its right to strike back, just as in 1941.

This framing approach finds an avid champion in Martin Bell’s thesis of a “journalism of attachment”, and ample application in the phenomenon of a patriotic press after September 11.

### **3.2. ‘Attachment’, patriotism and conflict resolution**

Based on the increasingly orthodox conviction that the media affect what they purport merely to reflect (Kieran, 1998: 18) Martin Bell, the television journalist and later British member of parliament, argues that the media’s appraisal of “reality” is a moral enterprise. Journalism “makes a difference”, says Bell, and journalists have a responsibility to be aware of what that difference is.

He speaks from experience. Having reported many wars, among them that in Bosnia for the BBC, Bell testifies it is almost impossible to remain “objective” and “impartial” in the face of evidently immoral atrocity. “When I have reported from the war zones, or anywhere else, I have done so with all the fairness and impartiality I could muster, and a scrupulous attention to the facts, but using my eyes and ears and mind and accumulated experience, which are surely the very essence of the subjective” (in Kieran, 1998: 16). He does not advocate what he calls “campaigning and crusading journalism” (he reserves such endeavour for Pilger), but a journalism which acknowledges its role in the formation of societal perceptions of right and wrong. A “journalism of attachment” (as cited in Kieran, 1998: 16)–

- “cares as well as knows,”
- “is aware of its responsibilities,” and
- “will not stand neutrally between good and evil, right and wrong, the victim and the oppressor.

“We as the press ... are part of the world,” says Bell. “We exercise a certain influence, and we have to know that. The influence might be for better or worse, and we have to know that too.” It is also based on this conviction and the demise of the mirror analogy that Andrew Belsey has argued that claims to total objectivity in reporting on conflict are not merely untruthful but undesirable. “The war reporter in the world of today cannot avoid witnessing an appalling collection of atrocities, massacres, torture and other crimes, and must not pretend that these are neutral events of no moral significance. Such pretence is a failure to be objective” (in Kieran, 1998: 12).



Thus, to avoid condemning what happened in New York and Washington and deny the aptness of the word “terrorism” when describing the attacks, a journalist would, by this token, be dishonest. Still, some newspapers described the attacks in apparently neutral terms. “U.S. Attacked”, said the *New York Times*, and referred to the attackers as “hijackers”, which they evidently were.

In general, however, the press did not attempt distanced, neutral reporting, at once apparently “proving” the inevitability of Bell’s “attachment” and signifying their willing subscription to his approach. I contend that the phenomenon of “patriotism” in the media agrees with the doctrine of “attachment”, in that it allows loyalties to be voiced and partisanship to shape the framing of news. A nuanced “attachment” may, like a qualified “patriotism”, still allow criticism, but the dominant frame demonstrated here invariably became less nuanced and more simplistic; ever more patriotic and irrevocably attached. As stated above (in the example of the BBC’s defence of its “selective impartiality” in the 1970s), partisanship is often shunned within a democracy but not vis-à-vis a democracy and its perceived foes.

Likewise, “attachment” to the idea of American resilience and righteousness after September 11 was not likely to be viewed within America as unacceptably partisan because it supposedly served the national interest. The pervasive Americanism in dominant media accounts of the attacks (chapter 1), resistance to dissenting views (chapter 2) and the introduction of American flags<sup>32</sup> into newsrooms (Steele, 2001a) suggest that the press determined not to stand neutrally towards the onslaught on their country. Indeed, as shown in chapter 1, many newspapers embraced a nationalistic approach (“One country ... Indivisible”), which arguably constituted the “encourage[ment] of one side in a political or ideological struggle and ... [the] discourage[ment] of another” – Clark’s definition of “propaganda” (2001a).

“Attachment” – the reporting stance that is infused with judgement and moral conviction – can thus become a justification for nationalistic reporting which allows media slogans such as “America fights back” (Clark, 2001a), that asks for accounts of ordinary, hash brown-eating Americans being killed (*Newsweek*) and indulges in analogies to previous conflicts in which American retaliation was almost unquestioningly justified (i.e. parallels to Pearl Harbor and the raising of the Iwo Jima flag).

The doctrine of “attachment”, however, can also encourage the instrumentality of journalists in conflict resolution. In this guise, the unavoidable engagement in the reported world which Bell espouses be-

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<sup>32</sup> Displays of the flag in newsrooms were indicative of a national reverence of this symbol of Americanism. *Time* (2002: 55) reported on September 11, 2002, that Walmart stores in American sold 116,000 American flags on the day of the attacks, opposed to 6,400 on September 11 of the previous year. Flags were, indeed, everywhere: “Stuck to bedroom windows, tied to car aerals, displayed in shop fronts, and hanging at half-mast from municipal buildings, the Star-Spangled Banner became a visual short-hand for the way America was feeling ... It was if, by clutching to ‘Old Glory’, Americans were trying to preserve the myth of impregnability” (cited in Baxter et al., 2001: 40).



comes, instead, an involvement in the processes of conflict that is sensitive to the danger that journalists' reporting may, in some cases, lead to the escalation of conflict (Botes, 1996: 6). Whereas Bell advocates a "caring" journalism that is not afraid to exert moral authority and judge according to societal custom, Botes advocates the positive involvement of journalists in affecting the outcomes of conflicts. He recognises that the media may help "mobilise a high level of public support for violent intervention against Iraq" in 1990, but advocates, too, an expanded involvement of journalists in "reframing" conflict in such a way that enables conflicting parties to search plausibly for common ground (1996: 7). Thus, journalists can "call attention to the dangers of escalation and to opportunities for settlement that the parties may not have recognised" (1996: 7). Journalists become not observers, but participants, though not as uncritical adherents of a dominant ideology, judging that which "common sense" deems "evil" (such as Islamic fundamentalism), but as a collective "early warning system" of conflict and a mechanism not of further polarisation but of increased debate.

An approach to a more "involved" journalism that concurs in many ways with Botes's conflict-based proposal, is that of so-called "peace journalism". In an authoritative exposition of this school of thought, Prof. Johan Galtung, scholar of "Peace Studies", condemned the "zero-sum analyses" that characterises many portrayals of conflict in the media (cited in *The Peace Journalism Option*, 1997: 12). Galtung bemoans the apparent unwillingness of journalists ever to contemplate in their analyses of conflict the possibility of avoiding conflict altogether. How can this be done? Apart from avoiding the "us-them-polarities" that were so pervasive in coverage of the September 11 attacks, Galtung's "Peace Option" (1997: 18) avoids the polarisation of interests and enemies and attempts, instead, to ...

- map the conflict, identifying all parties and their goals;
- seek out more than two diagonally opposed voices, articulating a range of interests;
- humanise all sides, showing sympathy by the same standard;
- promote understanding, moderate violence, and not heed calls for revenge;
- seek and publish inconvenient truths, problematising orthodox analyses;
- represent a nuanced reality, not wholly dictated by the interests of the dominant elite;
- expose untruths on all sides, and
- use human-interest stories not abusively, but by focusing on suffering on all sides (1997: 18).

This "involvement" does not attempt distance or "objectivity" but is "attached", instead, to a framing that seeks more opposing views. In a report titled *The Peace Journalism Option* that included Galtung's proposals, the authors agreed on the ideal of a journalism that is "aware of its own orientation and yet does not lapse into simplifications like ... 'side A is right and side B is wrong'. One which is prepared to



discuss the framework within which judgements are made, and thus renders them visible for the audience's inspection and assessment" (1997: 6). By being alert to suggestions of conciliation, such journalism could avoid a "one-dimensional discourse of conflict". "In this way, peace-journalism could fix a non-violent solution within the spectrum of options for policy-makers" (1997: 12).

The focus of Botes and Galtung is more obviously on peace journalism than that of Bell, which is premised more fundamentally on the value-based portrayals of journalists who cannot and should not remain aloof, distant and "objective". But Bell, too, sees in the "journalism of attachment" the duty to avoid clear "victim-demon dichotomies, both consisting of and drawing on opposed caricatures, good versus evil" (1997: 41). "Reality must be allowed to destroy entrenched notions of fact," he implores.

Whereas the received orthodoxy of "impartiality" begs of journalists not to allow their own value-judgements to colour their portrayals of the world, evolving conceptions about the media's role and its fundamental inability to reflect the world as is, have necessitated new approaches. Bell, Botes and Galtung have shown that a more "involved" media can foster polarisation or peace. Their approaches amend perceptions about the duty of journalists, and Botes especially positively expands it.

American newspapers showed in their "framings" of September 11 that they would not surrender the right to judge and condemn in the name of an orthodox "impartiality". In its relentless condemnation of the attacks and allegiance to a dominant discourse of American innocence and "righteous might" (Roosevelt, 1941), the press generally did allow its portrayals of reality to be value-based and partisan. But this also was a "selective partisanship", in that it initially allowed partisanship only vis-à-vis America's enemies in the "war on terror", while fomenting a unified patriotism and stifling dissent at home.

Domestic politics in America reflected the supposed ideal of solidarity that the media espoused, and became "bureaucratic and ... bipartisan" in the months after the attacks, wrote Ramesh Ponnuru in the *New York Times* (Ponnuru, 2002). Only after the war in Afghanistan had started, did Democrats and Republicans begin (openly) to harbour different views on the direction America's "war on terror" should take. For months, Democrats accused Republicans of shutting down legitimate debate, and the White House averred that Democratic criticism irresponsibly "undermined the war on terror".

But seeing that the conduct of the war was "one of the biggest issues before the country", Ponnuru argued that it should be a partisan issue within America. "Partisanship" is arguably a simpler concept in politics than in journalism, because it refers in Ponnuru's sense basically to party loyalty. But a bipartisan body politic co-existed with a press that was bipartisan within America, but highly partisan vis-à-vis America and its enemies. Ponnuru's call for "robust debate" in American politics is based on what he dubs the "American tradition ... of wartime cynicism". "[T]he current smothering unity serves no one's



real interests ... Reasonable people can reach different conclusions about how best to protect Americans". A "smothering unity", however, and the unwillingness to remain committed to a search for "inconvenient truths", also ill serves the ideal for which blood was let in Afghanistan: Democracy.

### 3.3. Press responsibility and democracy

Modern democracy is premised fundamentally on the freedom of society to elect its rulers and the ability to overthrow at the ballot leaders whose actions it deems contrary to its own interest. Thriving democracy, moreover, demands vigorous and constant re-evaluation of governance through unstifled debate, tolerates criticism from civil society in order better to inform future policy decisions and upholds the fundamental liberties that permit the practice of civil and democratic rights.

Ideas about journalism in democracy often echo values democrats value highly in government as well: Truthfulness, fairness, avoidance of conflicts of interest, honesty and openness, diversity, privacy (Black et al., 1995: 3). These tenets of sound journalism ideally allow an environment in which the free flow of information can enhance the careful and responsible but lively practise of civil and democratic rights. John Stuart Mill espoused a "marketplace of ideas" that fosters plurality of opinion and enhances the probability that sound ideas will persist. And ever since, the media have been regarded as necessary, though not sufficient, tools for trading ideas in and selling solutions to society.

Max Frankel, former editor of *The New York Times*, introduced the Poynter Institute's book of newspaper front pages after September 11 with a reminder that "dependable news occupies a precious but vulnerable place in our society" (Poynter, 2001: x). His ideas about the purpose of news in American democracy allude to much of what has been argued above about the ineluctable tie between news production and the values of the society it serves. Frankel wrote:

Every page of this book proves that news is no mere rendering of lifeless facts. ... News is the portrayal and ordering of information in vivid image and narrative. News is the transformation of facts into stories so that they can be understood and remembered in ways that inform and instruct even as they delight or dismay. News not only portrays events, it ranks them in some order of importance as defined by public needs and interests. And besides recounting events, meaningful news digs to discover their causes and to assess their consequences. News is not neutral. Like literature, the most important news dwells on stories of conflict, on the rivalries and casualties of life. Yet while conflict is universal, so is the human desire to avoid and reduce it. And so news also serves the armies of reform and implicitly holds out hope and a faith in progress. Since a free and open society is, by definition, a constantly self-correcting organism, it is constantly nourished by news that exposes flaws and failures and so stimulates debate about how to overcome them. News is the enemy of certainty, and therefore of tyranny.



In unfettered truth-telling, notwithstanding the conceptual limits to the idea of an ultimate “truth”, lies a vital requirement for the incessant exposure of failures of democracy. It is therefore plausible to regard the freedom of the media as vital in the preservation of the “self-correction” Frankel prizes.

“Press freedom”, however, should be substantively explicated to entail also the real capability to pursue inconvenient truths, also in times of conflict. The pervasive resistance to dissent after September 11 and the apparent consensus in the American media that reporting on “terror” demands a patriotic and unified response, defies such a substantive media freedom. It follows, however, in a tradition of compromising the pursuit of truth in times of war when it is deemed contrary to the “public interest”.

The BBC’s founding father, Sir John Reith, argued that “in total war, truthfulness could only be an aspiration” (Carruthers, 2000: 87). Later, in Vietnam, the defeat of the military by adverse public opinion in America fostered the perception that a free media might hurt the “national interest” by undermining controversial government projects. But it has been contended, and will be contended here, that the “national interest” in a democracy, soundly defined, is always better served by a substantively free media, willing and able persistently to reconsider government action, than by a media that confronts adversity with a “smothering unity” and solidarity.

Whereas patriotic media may inspire heroism, it may also relieve rulers of the duty of accountability by censoring criticism and ignoring “inconvenient truths”. In such distressing milieus, the media may be swayed by public support of media restraint and conceal information that is vital for the execution of democratic duties. “If a government is to be accountable to the people it must know what is going on,” writes Andrew Belsey. “If the people are to cast their votes wisely and rationally they too must know what is going on. Information is necessary (though not ... sufficient) for a successful democracy, inasmuch it requires the free circulation of news, opinion, debate and discussion” (in Kieran, 1998: 10).

Although it is generally acknowledged that press coverage may be restricted to protect military operations (in which case publication of “sensitive” information might endanger lives), media restrictions enacted in the name of protecting “civilian morale” are decidedly less justifiable, Ellis insists (cited in Kieran, 170): “A democratic people have a right to know what is happening in a war carried out in their name even if it does sap their support for it.” Indeed, the constructed need for high morale and the media’s complicity in fostering it, often serves as a motive for “concealment and deception” (Gilbert in Belsey, 1992: 138). A morale that persists in spite of pertinent facts, as is possible when the media equate patriotism and pride with “public interest”, can hardly sustain democracy.

If apologists of a restricted, uniform media after September 11 were to argue that the public supports media restrictions, the media might legitimise its fight for freedom by an appeal not to the public’s



desire or right to know – for if they do not care to know, as argued earlier, this premise for press freedom becomes problematic – but by an appeal to the public interest, defined by the values of openness and accountability that are fundamental to democracy (see also Williams in Belsey, 1992: 137).

Amid calls for patriotic journalism after September 11, some commentators persisted in the belief that a press that sports the Star-Spangled Banner as “war motif” compromised democratic values. In a warning to overly zealous newsrooms patriots, Steele (2001a) bid journalists to consider the significance of wearing an American flag at work or on television, as this might impair independence and discourage interviewees and colleagues who might oppose the “war on terror” to voice their opinions. Of editors that allow symbols of American nationalism onto newspaper pages, Steele asked: “What is your motive in using those graphics or slogans? Is it journalistically honest? Is it driven by public relations? By competitive strategies? ... What situations might arise in which your use of patriotic graphics or slogans is in tension with your news coverage?”

Steele thereby places the use of symbols of patriotism within the sphere of conflicts of interest, as such symbols may easily be interpreted as signs of unyielding support for the government of the day and a concomitant resistance to publish legitimate news reports that portray government policies and actions negatively. Not only flags or blue and red ribbons, however, constitute “symbols of patriotism”. The same uncritical sentiment is portrayed by overly nationalistic media framings of the attacks that do not allow for critical or dissenting interpretations of events. Graphic allusions to Iwo Jima are just as potent in the affirmation of a proud and righteous Americanism as the display of the Stars and Stripes.

Such symbolism seems to suggest that pride and defiance in the media better serve the interests of Americans than caution and circumspection – or the notion of a “thoughtful relativism” that Time’s Lance Morrow so detests (see Addendum A). Instead, the media serve democracy by remaining vigilant, critical and professional, because only then are democratically elected governments kept accountable – even during a “war on terror”. In a declaration on World Press Freedom Day on 3 May 2002, Kofi Annan, general secretary of the UN, Mary Robinson, UN high commissioner for human rights, and Koïchiro Matsuura, director of Unesco, highlighted what they viewed as the dangers that “terrorism” poses to sound journalism. Firstly, reporters’ lives may be lost in terrorist attacks.

But secondly, “terrorism may provoke governmental responses that lead to laws, regulations and forms of surveillance that undermine the very rights and freedoms that an anti-terrorist campaign is supposed to defend. In the name of anti-terrorism, principles and values ... may be put at risk. The greatest service that the media can perform in the fight against terrorism is to act freely, independently and responsibly. This means that they must either not be cowed by threats nor become mouthpieces of patriotic sentiment or inflammatory opinion. Rather, the media must search for and publicise the



truth; present information and views impartially; consider their words and images carefully; and uphold high standards of professional conduct” (Marthoz, 2002).

The case for freedom of the press regardless of a state of war combines orthodox notions of the importance of the search for truth with modern demands for sustained accountability in a democracy. It does not blindly recognise politicians or the military as the sole legitimate authors of what it means to act in the “public interest”, because such a blindness assumes that politicians and the military never err, and the democratic licence to replace governments and armies invariably suggests that they do.

The search for truth, however, is not sufficient if it only entails a commitment to accuracy. The notion of “truth”, even when it is qualified by the provisos in chapter 1, has to entail also a commitment to accurate framing *in context*. No exhaustive portrayal of reality is possible, but a frame drawn too narrowly can exclude facts without which “truth” becomes barren. Thus, historical references can adjust fundamentally the perspective from which blame is apportioned in any “new” conflict. And attempts to explain the causes of events – such as terror attacks – might empower politicians to avoid perpetuating policies that cause unnecessary harm and senselessly foment hatred.

Conflict reporting without proper context is dangerous. Thus Botes and Galtung (*supra*) espouse reporting that weighs its consequences. Foremost among the effects of isolated, simplistic framings is ignorance about the origins of conflict – and terrorism. Carruthers (2000: 191) maintains that by focusing only on the violent dimensions of terrorism, “with little or no attempt to contextualise its causes, media reports often leave readers, listeners or viewers ignorant as to the motivations of acts which, of themselves, may seem simply the senseless, inexplicable behaviour of lunatic extremists.”

After September 11, critics of the American media and prominent media figures such as Frankel spoke of the “danger that Americans invited when they lost their interest in the world beyond the self and in serious news coverage of those other realms” (in *Poynter*, 2001: x). Mediachannel, an independent media watchdog in America, reported that the American press had reduced coverage of foreign news by as much as 80% in the two decades before the attacks (*Mediachannel*, 2001).

This, argued Philip Knightley, a war reporting expert, left Americans “unaware of the growing hatred felt for the US in the rest of the world and thus contributed to the shock of the twin towers attack.” Such ignorance, he argues, is partly behind rising Islamophobia<sup>33</sup> in Britain (*Index*, 2002: 154). Merely framing terrorists, moreover, as “fanatics”, obviates the “need to examine the global environment in



which terrorists and terrorism develop, because such people are simply fanatics” (Pedelty in *Index*, 2002: 170). Instead, the media should pursue nuanced explanations that do not oversimplify conflict and demonise the enemy. An approach, argued Perves Hoodbhoy, a Pakistani columnist, that allows “cultural relativism”. “Now is the time to ask,” said Hoodbhoy, “what impelled terrorists to fly airliners filled with passengers into skyscrapers. (...) In the absence of such understanding, there remains only the medieval therapy of exorcism: for the strong to literally beat the devil out of the weak” (2002: 178).

Such is the recourse of mobs, not democrats. In order to enable circumspect decision-making in government and civil society, a press is needed that sustains vigorous debate even when an entire nation seeks revenge and retaliation and exorcism. Democratic freedoms become vacuous when exercised in a marketplace of ideas that is controlled by the powerful and maintained by a timid or overly patriotic press. A call for a critical press in America, the revered democracy, is not a call for an anti-American press. The press cannot but assist in healing sore societal wounds, however inflicted. But a vigilant press, which is willing to criticise declarations of war, unwilling to presuppose them, and aware of the “hatreds of the world” and its causes, can better serve democracy by allowing decisions informed even by disturbing truths. If a people values democracy, it cannot shun democracy’s cost.

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<sup>33</sup> British commentators have claimed Islamophobia was “as culturally deep-rooted and now more pervasive than anti-Semitism” after September 11. Knightley cites examples of “casual contempt ... directed at Muslims” that would be “widely regarded as completely unacceptable if targeted at Blacks, Jews or the Irish” (*Index*, 2002: 155).



## CONCLUSION

There is no denying that the attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, were heinous crimes. And so, any critique of the American press that denies the right to condemn the attacks is misplaced. For on the pages of newspapers a nation talks to itself (Miller, 1961), and a hesitant response to terror of such magnitude would not only suggest moral ambivalence towards the death of thousands of civilians, but would fail to grasp the magnitude of the events as *news*.

For news *is* not neutral, and although there are doubtless *explanations* for the reasons behind the attacks, there may never be justifications. The press may acknowledge this. They may even – quite reasonably – frame the attacks as “terrorist” acts, because the attacks *did* induce terror and were surely “terrorist” in the choice of targets. The press may, even before willingly embracing a “journalism of attachment”, read into its role that of empathiser and comforter (“One Nation ... Indivisible” said *The Daily Mississippian*), allocator of historical significance (“Our World is Changed” said *The Gamecock* in South Carolina), and articulator of rife public sentiment (“Unthinkable” said the *Arizona Daily Star*).

But conflict and tragedy call also for a heightened sense of responsibility to protect the legitimate interests of the public in a democracy. In mediating and framing the attacks knowing that they cannot frame *completely* and *precisely*, the American press sampled here constructed an interpretation of reality that spoke of solidarity, the unquestioned persistence of American society and a right to avenge the onslaught in much the same way America avenged the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.

Whereas metaphors may convey much passion and information in few words, the economy of simplification comes at a cost. For a simple phrase such as “new day of infamy” (*The Spokesman-Review*) not only assumes a symmetry of context, foe and apt response between contests 60 years apart, but also denies the complexities that shape contemporary conflicts. The use of simplistic metaphors and entrenched definitions of words such as “terrorism” can serve to uphold a dominant discourse when democracy demands pluralism, debate and a vigilant civil society instead.

Ideas about the role of the media have changed. Few would argue that the American press should have abstained from “choosing” between America and its (faceless) adversary in the hours after the September 11 attacks. But a *de facto* journalism of attachment such as that practised in the newspapers and magazines examined here, ill serves the public if it does not foster greater understanding of the “foreign”, point to the possible (and possibly avoidable) causes of conflict and apply consistently definitions that are easily only reserved for the enemy (“terrorist”, “fundamentalism”). For admitting to the unattainability of simplistic ideals such as “impartiality” and “objectivity”, a press still intent on serving a liberally defined “public interest” should aspire to be fair in its portrayals of the world.



In a liberal democracy such as America, fairness begs for consistency in the assignment of definitions.

It also begs for a greater commitment to unravel complex conflicts in a way that does not legitimise only the dominant, pro-American view. A “fair” press should guard against becoming so involved in a national, patriotic “project”, that it forgets its role as critic of the powerful. As guardians firstly of the public’s interest, the press should not adopt the “official” view uncritically, nor, paradoxically, succumb numbly to public claims for media restraint. Smothering unity forbids debate and disables democracy.

The American press served readers well by conveying colourfully and poignantly the magnitude of the country’s worst ever “terrorist” attack. Some, such as the *New York Times*, did so with admirable restraint. But knowing that hawks were hunting for a *causus belli*, most papers would have encouraged debate and better served democracy by offering, without condoning what the attackers did, perspectives that challenged the dominant framing of America and its privileged place in the world.

For the strength of American democracy is better confirmed under constant fire from within, than under an artificial cease-fire broken by startling attack from without.



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## **ADDENDA**

**Addendum A: Selections from *Time magazine*, Special Edition, September 2001**



# TIME



SEPTEMBER 11  
2001





# DAY OF

More than 40,000 people—the population of a small city—worked in the Twin Towers, and tens of

thousands more visited every day

PHOTOGRAPH BY AP/WIDEWORLD





HOLY WARRIOR As large swaths of lower Manhattan were turning to dust, farther uptown, at First Presbyterian on Fifth Avenue, the faithful gathered to hear the Rev. Jon Walton's "service of mourning and lament"

HOLY WARRIOR As large swaths of lower Manhattan were turning to dust, farther uptown, at First Presbyterian on Fifth Avenue, the faithful gathered to hear the Rev. Jon Walton's "service of mourning and lament"



# If you want to humble an empire



it makes sense to maim its cathedrals. They are symbols of its faith, and when they crumple and burn, it

tells us we are not so powerful and we can't be safe. The Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, planted at the base of Manhattan island with the Statue of Liberty as their sentry, and the Pentagon, a squat, concrete fort on the banks of the Potomac, are the sanctuaries of money and power that our enemies may imagine define us. But that assumes our faith rests on what we can buy and build, and that has never been America's true God.

On a normal day, we value heroism because it is uncommon. On Sept. 11, we valued heroism because it was everywhere. The

**By Nancy Gibbs**

fire fighters kept climbing the stairs of the tallest buildings in town, even as the steel moaned and the cracks spread in zippers through the walls, to get to the people trapped in the sky. We don't know yet how many of them died, but once we know, as Mayor Rudy Giuliani said, "it will be more than we can bear." That sentiment was played out in miniature in the streets, where fleeing victims pulled the wounded to safety, and at every hospital, where the lines to give blood looped round and round the block. At the medical-supply companies, which sent supplies without being asked. At Verizon, where a worker threw on a New York fire department jacket to go save people. And then again and again all across the country, as people checked on those they loved to find out if they were safe and then looked for some way to help.

This was the bloodiest day on American soil since our Civil War, a modern Antietam played out in real time, on fast-forward, and not with soldiers but with secretaries, security guards, lawyers, bankers, janitors. It was strange that a day of war was a day we stood still. We couldn't move—that must have been the whole idea—so we had no choice but to watch. Every city cataloged its targets; residents looked at their skylines, wondering if they would be different in the morning. The Sears Tower in Chicago was evacuated, as were colleges and museums. Disney World shut down, and Major League Baseball canceled its games, and nuclear power plants went to top security status; the Hoover Dam and the Mall of America shut down, and Independence Hall in Philadelphia, and Mount Rushmore. It was as though someone had taken a huge brush and painted a bull's-eye around every place Americans gather, every icon we revere, every service we depend on, and vowed to take them out or shut them down, or force us to do it ourselves.

**SHOCK IN THE HEARTLAND** In Iowa City, Iowa, Megan Elise McFarlane, center, watches television coverage of the attacks on Washington and New York City



Lance Morrow

# The Case for Rage and Retribution

**F**OR ONCE, LET'S HAVE NO "GRIEF COUNSELORS" standing by with banal consolations, as if the purpose, in the midst of all this, were merely to make everyone feel better as quickly as possible. We shouldn't feel better.

For once, let's have no fatuous rhetoric about "healing." Healing is inappropriate now, and dangerous. There will be time later for the tears of sorrow.

A day cannot live in infamy without the nourishment of rage. Let's have rage.

What's needed is a unified, unifying, Pearl Harbor sort of purple American fury—a ruthless indignation that doesn't leak away in a week or two, wandering off into Prozac-induced forgetfulness or into the next media sensation (O.J. ... Elián ... Chandra ...) or into a corruptly thoughtful relativism (as has happened in the recent past, when, for example, you might hear someone say, "Terrible what he did, of course, but, you know, the Unabomber does have a point, doesn't he, about modern technology?").

Let America explore the rich reciprocal possibilities of the *fatwa*. A policy of focused brutality does not come easily to a self-conscious, self-indulgent, contradictory, diverse, humane nation with a short attention span. America needs to relearn a lost discipline, self-confident relentlessness—and to relearn why human nature has equipped us all with a weapon (abhorred in decent peacetime societies) called hatred.

As the bodies are counted, into the thousands and thousands, hatred will not, I think, be a difficult emotion to summon. Is the medicine too strong? Call it, rather, a wholesome and intelligent enmity—the sort that impels even such a prosperous, messily tolerant organism as America to act. Anyone who does not loathe the people who did these things, and the people who cheer them on, is too philosophical for decent company.

It's a practical matter, anyway. In war, enemies are enemies. You find them and put them out of business, on the sound principle that that's what they are trying to do to you. If what happened on Tuesday does not give Americans the political will needed to exterminate men like Osama bin Laden and those who conspire with them in evil mischief, then nothing ever will and we are in for a procession of black Tuesdays.

This was terrorism brought to near perfection as a dramatic form. Never has the evil business had such production values. Normally, the audience sees only the smoking aftermath—the blown-up embassy, the ruined barracks, the ship

with a blackened hole at the waterline. This time the first plane striking the first tower acted as a shill. It alerted the media, brought cameras to the scene so that they might be set up to record the vivid surreal bloom of the second strike ("Am I seeing this?") and then—could they be such engineering geniuses, so deft at demolition?—the catastrophic collapse of the two towers, one after the other, and a sequence of panic in the streets that might have been shot for a remake of *The War of the Worlds* or for *Independence Day*. Evil possesses an instinct for theater, which is why, in an era of gaudy and gifted media, evil may vastly magnify its damage by the power of horrific images.

It is important not to be transfixed. The police screamed to the people running from the towers, "Don't look back!"—a biblical warning against the power of the image. Terrorism is sometimes described (in a frustrated, oh-the-burdens-of-great-power tone of voice) as "asymmetrical warfare." So what? Most of history is a pageant of asymmetries. It is mostly the asymmetries that cause history to happen—an obscure Schickelgruber nearly destroys Europe; a mere atom, artfully diddled, incinerates a city. Elegant perplexity puts too much emphasis on the "asymmetrical" side of the phrase and not enough on the fact that it is, indeed, real warfare. Asymmetry is a concept. War is, as we see, blood and death.

It is not a bad idea to repeat a line from the 19th century French anarchist thinker Pierre-Joseph Proudhon: "The fecundity of the unexpected far exceeds the prudence of statesmen." America, in the spasms of a few hours, became a changed country. It turned the corner, at last, out of the 1990s. The menu of American priorities was rearranged. The presidency of George W. Bush begins now. What seemed important a few days ago (in the media, at least) became instantly trivial. If Gary Condit is mentioned once in the next six months on cable television, I will be astonished.

During World War II, John Kennedy wrote home to his parents from the Pacific. He remarked that Americans are at their best during very good times or very bad times; the in-between periods, he thought, cause them trouble. I'm not sure that is true. Good times sometimes have a tendency to make Americans squalid.

The worst times, as we see, separate the civilized of the world from the uncivilized. This is the moment of clarity. Let the civilized toughen up, and let the uncivilized take their chances in the game they started. ■

**What's needed is a unified, unifying, Pearl Harbor sort of purple American fury—a ruthless indignation that doesn't leak away in a week or two**



**Addendum B: Selections from *Newsweek Extra Edition*, September 2001**



**EXTRA EDITION**

# AMERICA UNDER ATTACK

# Newweek

THE INTERNATIONAL NEW

**9:03 A.M.  
TUESDAY,  
SEPT. 11, 2001**

**Hijacked United Airlines  
Flight 175 explodes into  
the World Trade Center**



Algeria	AD 14.00	Iran	RIs 25.000	Mauritius	Rs 49.00	S. Arabia	SR 16.00	UAE	Dh 16.00
Bahrain	BD 1.60	Jordan	JD 2.500	Morocco	DH 31.00	S. Africa	R 14.00	Uganda	Schs 4.600.00
Burundi	FBU 700	Kenya	Shs 200	Namibia	N \$14.90	Sierra Leone	L 5000	Yemen	YR 320.00
Egypt	EG 10.50	Kuwait	KD 1.450	Nigeria	N 200.00	Syria	SE 145.00	Zimbabwe(inc. tax)	ZS65.00
Gambia	D50.00	Lebanon	LL5000	Oman	OR 1.60	Tanzania	TSH 2000.00	U.S. Forces	\$3.00
Ghana	\$3.50	Liberia	\$3.00	Qatar	QR 16.00	Tunisia	TD 2.90		



**Newsweek**

September 11, 2001

Nothing like this has ever happened to America before. With chilling skill, terrorists struck at our heart last Tuesday, hijacking commercial jets, then crashing into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon — cold-blooded murder on a mass scale. The human toll is beyond imagining, the psychic costs difficult to calculate. We always thought we were safe. We were wrong.

# Our Worst Nightmare

KRISTEN BROCHMANN — NEW YORK TIMES



That message, allegedly sent by Osama bin Laden's men, makes him suspect No. 1. Can he be stopped at last? BY MICHAEL HIRSH

# 'We've Hit The Targets'

**A**T THE TIME IT SEEMED AN EMPTY BOAST, IF A chilling one. On Feb. 7, 1995, Ramzi Yousef, considered the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, was being escorted in shackles back to New York City. The FBI had just seized Yousef in Pakistan, and agents felt they could crow a little. An FBI SWAT commando pulled up his captive's blindfold and nudged him as they flew in a helicopter over mid-Manhattan, pointing to the World Trade Center's lights glowing in the clear night. "Look down there," he told Yousef. "They're still standing." Yousef replied, "They wouldn't be if I had enough money and explosives." Recalls Lewis Schiliro, a former head of the FBI's

New York field office, "He was as cold as ice." Today Ramzi Yousef is safely in prison, as are five of his confederates from the failed 1993 attempt. But Yousef's passion for killing Americans is flourishing in a loose network of tiny Islamic fundamentalist terror groups spread around the world. And the main suspect in the worst foreign attack on the continental United States is the chief impresario and financier of that network, Osama bin Laden, the gaunt, bearded Saudi exile who in February 1998 declared all Americans to be legitimate targets of jihad, or holy war. Bin Laden has nursed a fervent hatred of the United States since its troops landed on Saudi soil to fight the gulf war, and he has haunted the worst nightmares of U.S. security officials for years. The scion of a wealthy Saudi magnate, he was linked to the 1998 twin U.S. Embassy bombings in Africa and the explosion aboard the USS Cole in Yemen last year. But until last Tuesday, bin Laden had

not succeeded in shedding blood on American soil.

By the end of America's day of horror, U.S. intelligence officials said, most people inside the federal government were almost certain—about 90 percent certain, the consensus had it—that bin Laden and his global organization, Al Qaeda (The Base), were behind the attacks. One key reason: shortly after the suicide attacks, a source with access to intelligence told NEWSWEEK, U.S. intelligence picked up communications among bin Laden associates relaying a message: "We've hit the targets."

On Wednesday, the FBI detained several people whom they are now describing as "material witnesses" in Boston and south Florida. Authorities also said they had identified the two or three terrorists who hijacked each plane. The suspects were said to have entered the country from all over the world, and some had been living in the United States for up to a year. Early leads suggest

#### PRIME SUSPECT

Saudi exile Osama bin Laden stands at the top of the list as American officials seek those responsible for the attacks



the team had domestic support networks rooted in the Boston area, but some of the bombers may have come from Canada, which also harbored the terrorist cell that planned the millennium bombing in Los Angeles. A British intelligence source told NEWSWEEK that "two brothers, working on United Arab Emirates passports, one of them a trained pilot, have been placed at the Boston airport." Even so, investigators had only just begun to ferret out the full dimensions of the plot. "We're in Oklahoma mode now," said one FBI counterterrorism agent, referring to the frenzy of police work that followed the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing. He added: "This is a rubble pile that makes Oklahoma City look like a sandbox." New FBI chief Robert Mueller, on only his second week of work, conducted a 6 p.m. conference call with special agents in charge of all the 56 field offices. He announced that Washington would take control of the biggest investigation in the agency's history and appointed veteran deputy director Tom Pickard to run it. FBI officials said they knew this probe was different from anything else they'd ever done. "This is not going to be a classic forensic investigation," said the counterterrorism agent. "You're not looking for a traditional bomb 'signature' like the rear axle of the Ryder truck. The bomb signature is a plane in the sky." In other words, there may be little forensic evidence to investigate.

For the moment the link to bin Laden and Ramzi Yousef appeared to be largely circumstantial. Investigators believe that radical Egyptian organizations were directly behind the suicide attacks. One, Al Gamaa al Islamiya, was run by Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman, the blind Muslim cleric who is serving a prison term in Minnesota for allegedly conspiring with World Trade Center bombing suspects to blow up other New York landmarks. Bin Laden recently has turned complaints about Abdel-Rahman's imprisonment and treatment by U.S. authorities into a crusade, committing his followers to freeing the religious leader. U.S. officials have identified Ayman al-Zawahiri, the head of another Egyptian militant group that supports the sheik, as deputy leader of Al Qaeda. Abdel-Rahman is kept in solitary confinement, and a month ago U.S. authorities seized his radio.

The fast fingering of bin Laden also did not mask the fact that, like the rest of the country, U.S. officials were in a state of shock over what may go down as the most massive failure of military and intelligence readiness in the nation's history. Bush called last Tuesday's searing experience a demonstration of American fortitude. In truth it was a stunning display of



## The deadly daylight attacks were as sophisticated and well coordinated as U.S. investigators have ever seen

America's vulnerability—now and well into the future. Always before, U.S. experts tended to dismiss the idea that terrorists could combine both suicidal fervor and technical skill and sophistication. The 1993 World Trade Center attack, in which conspirators exploded a bomb-laden van in the basement, was seen as just another ragged effort; afterward the terrorists gave themselves away when one was stupid enough to try to get his deposit back on the rental van. Similarly, when an Algerian terrorist was arrested crossing the border from Canada just before Y2K, his obvious nervousness gave him away to an alert Customs official.

By contrast, last Tuesday's coordinated assault on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon was as sophisticated a terror attack as U.S. investigators have seen. A chief mystery was how the culprits might have found four apparently trained pilots to fly suicide missions. One frightening prospect is that bin Laden is winning educated Arab elites to his cause, especially as the Palestinian *intifada* inflames the Arab world. The FBI has picked up previous hints of high-level help: in 1995 Abdul Hakim Murad, a Pakistani, was accused along with Yousef of a plot to bomb 11 U.S. airliners in a single "day of rage" against the United States. Murad, a commercial pilot, allegedly told investigators that he had been trained as a kamikaze pilot.

Just as scary, the new attacks also suggested that the terrorists had an extensive domestic support network—confederates on the ground who helped them gather intelligence on the targets and possibly provided shelter and logistical support. Could the bombers have been stopped? NEWSWEEK has learned that while U.S. intelligence received no specific warning, the state of alert had been high during the past two weeks, and a particularly urgent warning may have been received the night before



### THE FOES WE FACE

**Jailed terrorist Ramzi Yousef (left), Iraq's Saddam Hussein and Libyan leader Muammar Kaddafi**

the attacks, causing some top Pentagon brass to cancel a trip. Why that same information was not available to the 266 people who died aboard the four hijacked commercial aircraft may become a hot topic on the Hill. In testimony to the Intelligence Committee earlier this year, CIA Director George Tenet said bin Laden posed the most immediate terrorist threat to Americans around the world and was capable of "multiple attacks with little or no warning." "There is a giant accountability issue starting today," says former Afghani-

stan CIA station chief Milt Bearden, "and in the midst of legitimate accountability there will be a lot of scapegoating. They're going to start looking for the modern-day equivalent of General Short and Admiral Kimmel [the armed-forces commanders at Pearl Harbor], and they're going to find them."

The deeper problem for counterterrorism experts is that bin Laden's network is so diffuse and diverse—a patchwork of renegade Algerian, Palestinian, Egyptian and other cells—and that foreign governments, including friendly ones, move slowly to crack down on people they know are his supporters. Only last February, a few weeks before Tenet's testimony, a NEWSWEEK reporter sat down in a London coffee shop with Yasser el-Sirri, one of bin Laden's alleged associates. El-Sirri cheerfully boasted that the Egyptian government had sentenced him to death for crimes of terrorism. Attempts to snatch or kill bin Laden have been frustrated by the difficulty of getting precise information on where he is in the mountains of Afghanistan, not to mention a U.S. presi-



dential order barring assassination. Though U.S. intelligence had wiretaps on bin Laden's key lieutenants before the Kenya and Tanzania embassy bombings, they were unable to pick up enough information to prevent them.

Some counterterrorism operatives now speculate that intelligence picked up by U.S. agencies about possible terrorist attacks on Americans last June may actually have been leaked by operatives associated with bin Laden. Now it appears the terrorists "may have been testing where and how we picked up information—and what were the things we missed," says a U.S. investigator based in the Persian Gulf. "They saw where we reacted, and presumably also where we didn't react." Were they casing American airports to see if extra precautions went into effect? "They not only know how to plan, but they know how to test," said this source, "and they know, obviously, where the gaps are."

Among the worst of those gaps is the ramshackle state of security checks at U.S. airports. The ability of unknown bombers

to exploit these soft spots—and to do it so jarringly, ripping a hole in the heart of America's financial and military power—could itself have serious consequences. For it demonstrates that it can be done again. In fact, terrorism experts say that for years their worst fear has been that a suicide bomber would hit inside U.S. borders. "If someone really wants to kill himself in order to blow up a building here, there is no level of sustainable security in this country that could prevent it," says one official. "We just aren't equipped to handle it. It is beyond us psychologically. And the citizens of this country are not willing to tolerate the lack of freedom that this level of security would mean."

That could now change, as part of a tectonic shift in America's sense of vulnerability. "This shows that you can have mass-destruction terrorism without weapons of mass destruction," says Gideon Rose, a terror expert at the Council on Foreign Relations. And that even a missile defense won't help. "We're going to have to enact laws that some

people from the far left and the far right won't like," adds a senior intelligence source. He points to Britain's sweeping new law that, as he puts it, extends the draconian security measures—including surveillance and holding people on mere suspicion—already used in troubled Northern Ireland. He adds: "We have to understand that national security will have to take some precedence over what we have seen as the right to privacy."

Sen. Jon Kyl, a member of the Intelligence Committee, says he's been pushing for years for more intelligence money and less red tape—and for dropping concerns about recruiting human-rights violators as infiltrators into terror groups. "My first reaction was that my knees were weak," he said. "But frankly, my second reaction was that all of the things we've been saying we have to do—maybe through this disaster they'll get more attention." No doubt they will.

*With MARK HOSENBALL, DANIEL KLAIDMAN and DONATELLA LORCH in Washington and PEG TYRE, CHRISTOPHER DICKEY and ANDREW NAGORSKI in New York*



### **Addendum C: Text of speech by President George W. Bush, September 11, 2001**

Good evening.

Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts.

The victims were in airplanes or in their offices – secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers. Moms and dads. Friends and neighbors.

Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror.

The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness and a quiet, unyielding anger.

These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed. Our country is strong. A great people has been moved to defend a great nation.

Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shatter steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve.

America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining.

Today, our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature, and we responded with the best of America, with the daring of our rescue workers, with the caring for strangers and neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could.

Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans. Our military is powerful, and it's prepared. Our emergency teams are working in New York City and Washington, D.C., to help with local rescue efforts.

Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured and to take every precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks.

The functions of our government continue without interruption. Federal agencies in Washington which had to be evacuated today are reopening for essential personnel tonight and will be open for business tomorrow.

Our financial institutions remain strong, and the American economy will be open for business as well.



The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts. I've directed the full resources for our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.

I appreciate so very much the members of Congress who have joined me in strongly condemning these attacks. And on behalf of the American people, I thank the many world leaders who have called to offer their condolences and assistance.

America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world and we stand together to win the war against terrorism.

Tonight I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us spoken through the ages in Psalm 23: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me."

This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time.

None of us will ever forget this day, yet we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.

Thank you. Good night and God bless America.



**Addendum D: *The New York Times*, September 12, 2001, p. 1**



"All the News That's Fit to Print"

# The New York Times

**Late Edition**  
New York: Today, sunny, a few afternoon clouds. High 77. Tonight, slightly more humid. Low 65. Tomorrow, sun then clouds. High 81. Yesterday, high 81, low 63. Weather map, Page C19.

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NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2001

81 beyond the greater New York metropolitan area.

75 CENTS

# U.S. ATTACKED

## HIJACKED JETS DESTROY TWIN TOWERS AND HIT PENTAGON IN DAY OF TERROR

### A CREEPING HORROR

Buildings Burn and Fall as Onlookers Search for Elusive Safety

By N. R. KLEINFELD

It kept getting worse. The horror arrived in episodic bursts of chilling disbelief, signified first by trembling floors, sharp eruptions, cracked windows. There was the actual unthinkable realization of a gaping, flaming hole in first one of the tall towers, and then the same thing all over again in its twin. There was the merciless sight of bodies helplessly tumbling out, some of them in flames.

Finally, the mighty towers themselves were reduced to nothing. Dense plumes of smoke raced through the downtown avenues, coursing between the buildings, shaped like tornadoes on their sides. Every sound was cause for alarm. A plane appeared overhead. Was another one coming? No, it was a fighter jet. But was it friend or enemy? People scrambled for their lives, but they didn't know where to go. Should they go north, south, east, west? Stay outside, go indoors? People hid beneath cars and each other. Some contemplated jumping into the river.

For those trying to flee the very epicenter of the collapsing World Trade Center towers, the most horrid thought of all finally dawned on them: nowhere was safe.

For several panic-stricken hours yesterday morning, people in Lower Manhattan witnessed the indescribable, the incomprehensible, the unthinkable. "I don't know what the gates of hell look like, but it's got to be like this," said John Maloney, a security director for an Internet firm in the trade center. "I'm a combat veteran, Vietnam, and I never saw anything like this."

The first warnings were small ones. Blocks away, Jim Farmer, a film composer, was having breakfast at a small restaurant on West Broadway. He heard the sound of a jet. An odd sound — too loud, it seemed, to be

Continued on Page A7

### A Somber Bush Says Terrorism Cannot Prevail

By ELISABETH BUMILLER with DAVID E. SANGER

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11 — President Bush vowed tonight to retaliate against those responsible for today's attacks on New York and Washington, declaring that he would "make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them."

"These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat, but they have failed," the president said in his first speech to the nation from the Oval Office. "Our country is strong. Terrorist acts can shake the foundation of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America."

His speech came after a day of trauma that seems destined to define his presidency. Seeking to at once calm the nation and declare his determination to exact retribution, he told a country numbed by repeated scenes of carnage that "these acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve."

Mr. Bush spoke only hours after returning from a zigzag course across the country, as his Secret Service and military security teams moved him from Florida, where he woke up this morning expecting to press for his education bill, to command posts in Louisiana and Nebraska before it was determined the attacks had probably ended and he could safely return to the capital.

It was a sign of the catastrophic

Continued on Page A4



### President Vows to Exact Punishment for 'Evil'

By SERGE SCHMEMANN

Hijackers rammed jetliners into each of New York's World Trade Center towers yesterday, toppling both in a hellish storm of ash, glass, smoke and leaping victims, while a third jetliner crashed into the Pentagon in Virginia. There was no official count, but President Bush said thousands had perished, and in the immediate aftermath the calamity was already being ranked the worst and most audacious terror attack in American history.

The attacks seemed carefully coordinated. The hijacked planes were all en route to California, and therefore gorged with fuel, and their departures were spaced within an hour and 40 minutes. The first, American Airlines Flight 11, a Boeing 767 out of Boston for Los Angeles, crashed into the north tower at 8:48 a.m. Eighteen minutes later, United Airlines Flight 175, also headed from Boston to Los Angeles, plowed into the south tower.

Then an American Airlines Boeing 757, Flight 77, left Washington's Dulles International Airport bound for Los Angeles, but instead hit the western part of the Pentagon, the military headquarters where 24,000 people work, at 9:40 a.m. Finally, United Airlines Flight 93, a Boeing 737 flying from Newark to San Francisco, crashed near Pittsburgh, raising the possibility that its hijackers had failed in whatever their mission was.

There were indications that the hijackers on at least two of the planes were armed with knives. Attorney General John Ashcroft told reporters in the evening that the suspects on Flight 11 were armed that way. And Barbara Olson, a television commentator who was traveling on American Flight 77, managed to reach her husband, Solicitor General Theodore Olson, by cell phone and to tell him that the hijackers were armed with knives and a box cutter.

In all, 266 people perished in the four planes and several score more were known dead elsewhere. Numerous firefighters, police officers and other rescue workers who responded to the initial disaster in Lower Manhattan were killed or injured when the buildings collapsed. Hundreds were treated for cuts, broken bones, burns and smoke inhalation.

But the real carnage was concealed for now by the twisted, smoking, ash-choked carcasses of the twin towers, in which thousands of people used to work on a weekday. The collapse of the towers caused another World Trade Center building to fall 7 hours later, and several

Continued on Page A14

### Awaiting the Aftershocks

Washington and Nation Plunge Into Fight With Enemy Hard to Identify and Punish

By R. W. APPLE JR.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11 — Today's devastating and astonishingly well-coordinated attacks on the World Trade Center towers in New York and on the Pentagon outside Washington plunged the nation into a warlike struggle against an enemy that will be hard to identify with certainty and hard to punish with precision.

The whole nation — to a degree the whole world — shook as hijacked airliners plunged into buildings that symbolize the financial and military might of the United States. The sense of security and self-confidence that Americans take as their birthright suffered a grievous blow, from which recovery will be slow. The aftershocks will be nearly as bad, as hundreds and possibly thousands of people discover that friends or relatives died awful, fiery deaths.

Scenes of chaos and destruction evocative of the nightmare world of Hieronymus Bosch, with smoke and debris blotting out the sun, were carried by television into homes and workplaces across the nation. Echoing Franklin D. Roosevelt's description of the attack on Pearl Harbor as an event "which will live in infamy," Gov. George E. Pataki of New York, a Republican, spoke of "an incredible outrage" and Senator Charles E. Schumer of New York, a Democrat, spoke of "a dastardly attack."

But mere words were inadequate vessels to contain the sense of shock and horror that people felt.

As Washington struggled to regain

Continued on Page A24

### MORE ON THE ATTACKS

- RESCUERS BECOME VICTIMS** Firefighters who rushed to the trade center were killed. PAGE A2
- SEARCH FOR SURVIVORS** Some people trapped in the rubble for hours were rescued. PAGE A1
- OFFICIALS SUSPECT BIN LADEN** Eavesdropping intercepts after the attacks were cited. PAGE A31
- TERRORISTS EXPLOIT WEAKNESS** Investigators had criticized precautions against hijacking. PAGE A17
- CASUALTIES IN WASHINGTON** An unknown number of people were killed at the Pentagon. PAGE A5



Justin Lane/The New York Times



**AMERICAN TARGETS** A ball of fire exploded outward after the second of two jetliners slammed into the World Trade Center, less than two hours later, both of the 110-story towers were gone. Hijackers crashed a third airliner into the Pentagon, setting off a huge explosion and fire.



Ruth Fremson/The New York Times



**SECOND PLANE** United Airlines Flight 175 nearing the trade center's south tower.

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**Addendum E: *Philadelphia Daily News Extra*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, September 11, 2001,  
p. 1**



SPECIAL REPORT 60¢


TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

# EXTRA

PHILADELPHIA

# DAILY NEWS

THE PEOPLE PAPER

- 
- **PLANES HIT WORLD TRADE CENTER**
  - **110-STORY TOWERS COLLAPSE, BODIES TUMBLE OUT**
  - **EXPLOSIONS ROCK PENTAGON, STATE DEPT.**
  - **FLIGHTS GROUNDED NATIONWIDE**
  - **BUSH ORDERS FULL-SCALE PROBE**
  - **COMMERCIAL PLANE HIJACKED**

# ATTACK!

PAGES 2-4





**Addendum F: *Arizona Daily Star*, Tucson, Arizona, September 12, 2001, p. 1**





# UNTHINKABLE

## Terrorists use knives, box cutters to hijack four planes; World Trade Center destroyed, Pentagon damaged



**MOMENT OF HORROR** Huge, flying bomb zeros in for its assault on the second World Trade Center tower as the first burns with a fatal fury.



**OVERWHELMING TASK** In a scene right out of a disaster movie, firefighters make an early, tentative probe of the World Trade Center rubble.

**“ We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them. ”**



President Bush  
In an address to the nation

## Death toll seen in thousands; rescue delayed

FROM WIRE REPORTS

A pall of smoke, dust and sadness settled over lower Manhattan at nightfall Tuesday as rescue workers, police and firefighters pressed their desperate search for survivors of the worst terrorist attack in United States history, a coordinated airborne assault that destroyed the twin towers of the World Trade Center and left a portion of the Pentagon in Washington in smoking ruins.

In New York alone, it was feared the death toll could reach the thousands. Officials said at least 300 firefighters and 70 police officers were missing and presumed dead at midday. Upwards of 30,000 people worked in the 110-story World Trade Center towers, reduced by explosions and fire to ruins within hours of the initial attack.

Speaking Tuesday evening from the White House, President Bush evoked a biblical message in saying the United States was walking "through the valley of the shadow of death" but still feared no evil. He described the attack as a mass murder that had ended the lives of thousands of people and called on the nation to remember the victims in its prayers.

Amid reports that investigators were focusing their attention on renegade Saudi exile Osama bin Laden, believed to be in exile in Afghanistan, Bush promised all the government's resources would be used to find and punish the perpetrators of the attack.

"Today, our nation saw evil," Bush said. Said Adm. Robert J. Natter, commander of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet: "We have been attacked like we haven't since Pearl Harbor."

SEE DISASTER / A7

## Bin Laden links start to emerge

By Karen Gullo and John Solomon  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — U.S. officials began piecing together a case linking Osama bin Laden to the worst terrorist attack in U.S. history, aided by an intercept of communications between his supporters and harrowing cellphone calls from victims aboard the jetliners before they crashed on Tuesday.

Authorities were focusing some of their efforts on possible bin Laden supporters in Florida based on the identification of a suspected hijacker on one of the manifests of the four jets that crashed, law enforcement officials said.

The FBI was preparing to search locations in Broward County in South Florida and the Daytona Beach area in Central Florida, Florida Department of Law Enforcement spokesman Rick Morera said.

The locations had links to the suspected bin Laden supporter on the jet manifest, officials said.

Among the passengers was Barbara Olson, the wife of a top Justice Department official, who called her husband as the hijacking took place.

U.S. intelligence intercepted communications between bin Laden supporters discussing the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, according to



Barbara Olson, a victim, called from a hijacked plane.

SEE BIN LADEN / A7

### THE PENTAGON

Reports suggest that as many as 800 people died in attack on defense headquarters. Still, says top official, "The Pentagon is functioning."

PAGE A2

### NEW YORK CITY

Scenes of devastation, panic and fear unfolded as thousands fled the city on foot.

PAGE A3

### TWIN TOWERS

The engineer who designed the World Trade Center said the towers could take a 707 hit.

PAGE A4

### THE ECONOMY

Fed official speaking in Tucson says the nation's financial system is in no danger.

PAGE A10

### IN TUCSON

Residents join in widespread prayer; followers of Islam are target of anger; Red Cross seeks blood donations.

PAGE A15

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[www.azstarnet.com](http://www.azstarnet.com)

A PULITZER NEWSPAPER  
Vol. 200, No. 255

Get Star stories from Tuesday and today, or watch local and national video coverage.  
[azstarnet.com/attack](http://azstarnet.com/attack)





**Addendum G: *San Fransisco Chronicle*, San Fransisco, California, September 12, 2001, p. 1**



# San Francisco Chronicle

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA'S LARGEST NEWSPAPER

\*\*\*\*\*

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2001

415-777-1111 25 CENTS PUBLISHED DAILY

Terrorists mount their most brazen and devastating attack in history as hijackers turn four passenger planes into bombs — and change America forever

# NIGHTMARE



The South Tower collapsed, and when it was over, dust and debris covered streets around the World Trade Center and a mushroom cloud floated above it.

AP/WIDE WORLD

## EXPANDED COVERAGE



Associated Press

### Attacks stun the nation

Terrorists crash hijacked jetliners into the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon near Washington. **A3**

### Joan Ryan

The tragedy lets us know that our sense of security is as illusory as a Hollywood set. **A2**

### Test of the president

Bush is confronted with worst act of aggression against the U.S. since Pearl Harbor. **A4**

### Frantic call from S.F.-bound jet

San Francisco man phones his wife seconds before his United flight goes down in Pennsylvania. **A5**

### Bay Area in shock

As events unfold, residents feel like it is all a dream. **A17**

### Business toll

Big names in U.S. and international business suffer serious casualties. **BUSINESS, B1**

### John Carman

Television struggles to find its way in the face of such tragedy. **DATEBOOK, E1**

### Sports world reacts

Sporting events virtually shut down in response to terrorist attacks. **SPORTS, D1**

### On the Web

For news updates, additional photos, videos and a discussion group, go to [sfgate.com](http://sfgate.com)



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San Francisco Chronicle



**Addendum H: *Philadelphia citypaper*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, September 13-20, 2001, p. 1**



PHILADELPHIA  
**citypaper**

[www.citypaper.net](http://www.citypaper.net)

NEWS | ARTS | ENTERTAINMENT

Sept. 13 - Sept. 20, 2001 #852

**NOTHING  
WILL EVER  
BE THE SAME**



**Addendum I: *Austin American-Statesman*, Austin, Texas, September 12, 2001, p. 1**



# SPECIAL REPORT

# Austin American-Statesman

50 cents Final

statesman.com

Wednesday, September 12, 2001

# 'OUR NATION SAW EVIL'

- **Targets:** Hijacked planes slam into World Trade Center, Pentagon
- **The toll:** Thousands are killed in world's worst terrorist attack
- **Missing:** Nearly 400 NYC firefighters, police feared dead; 266 aboard jets
- **The suspect:** Evidence 'strongly points' to terror mastermind bin Laden
- **Gridlock:** U.S. markets shut down; air travel halted; Austin airport closes
- **The president:** Tragedy fills nation with 'a quiet, unyielding anger'



Guliam Samokov/Associated Press

Covered in dust and debris, people made their way through the layers of destruction on the streets of New York as they walked away from the World Trade Center, where both towers collapsed.

## U.S. has 'no blueprint' for how to strike back

By PAUL RICHTER  
Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — The terrorist attack on the United States put powerful pressure on President Bush to retaliate swiftly, even as U.S. officials and outside experts warned that any military operation will involve risks and tough choices.

Although U.S. officials said they have no conclusive evidence showing who was responsible, many government officials and terrorism experts consider Saudi dissident Osama bin Laden the prime suspect. If the Bush administration eventually concludes he is to blame, the Pentagon could choose a variety of responses.

The military could launch air attacks on bin Laden's camps in Afghanistan and seek to strike his cells in the Middle East and around the world. As the Clinton administration learned, hitting the bin Laden operation with enough force to deter future terrorism will be tough. Unlike nations with military infrastructures and targets such as tank divisions and air defense batteries,

bin Laden's network is widely dispersed, consisting of relatively mobile terrorist cells with few easily identifiable targets.

Also, the suicide terrorists who carried out Tuesday's attacks have such strong motives that any counterattack may not deter them — and could even strengthen their resolve. Another option for the Pentagon would be to hit the military and command infrastructure of the Taliban government in Afghanistan. The Taliban, which has acquiesced to bin Laden's activities in their country, denied any involvement and condemned Tuesday's attacks.

Explosions shook Afghanistan's capital of Kabul hours after the attacks in the United States, but Bush administration officials denied any responsibility. In a briefing at the Pentagon, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said that "in no way is the United States government connected to those explosions."

It may be days, weeks or even months before a fuller picture of Tuesday's attacks is assembled. In

See U.S. forces, A20



Carmon Taylor/Associated Press

A fireball spews glass and steel out of the World Trade Center's south tower after an airliner rammed it Tuesday morning. The building later collapsed as the flames gutted the upper floors.

## Airliners are turned into weapons of terror

By SCOTT SHEPARD  
AND SHELLEY EMLING  
American-Statesman Washington Staff

WASHINGTON — Unknown enemies waged the worst terrorist attack in U.S. history Tuesday, flying hijacked airliners into the World Trade Center, collapsing the 110-story buildings into piles of rubble, and into the Pentagon. There was no official count, but President Bush said thousands had perished.

Bush condemned the attacks as the government assumed a war footing.

"Today, our nation saw evil... This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace," Bush said in a national address Tuesday night. "America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time."

The horrendous attacks, witnessed on televisions across the world, seemed carefully coordinated. They began when two commercial jetliners that were hijacked within 16 minutes of each other from Boston's Logan International Airport crashed into the

giant World Trade Center tower in New York City. Soon afterward another hijacked commercial airliner plowed into the Pentagon outside the nation's capital, fourth hijacked plane, crashed miles southeast of Pittsburgh, barely bound for the presidential retreat at Camp David, Md.

"The search is under way those who are behind these acts," Bush said as rescuers continued combing through rubble the various targeted sites searching for survivors.

No one took responsibility for the attacks, but federal authorities pointed to Osama bin Laden an exiled Saudi millionaire who has been linked to an earlier bombing of the World Trade Center.

Police sources said some people trapped in the twin towers managed to call authorities or family members and that some troop police officers made radio contact in one of the calls, which took place in the afternoon, a businessman phoned his family to he was trapped with police

See Attacks, A19



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**Addendum J1: *The Washington Post*, District of Columbia, September 12, 2001, p. 1**

**Addendum J2: *The Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, Ohio, September 12, 2001, p. 1**

**Addendum J3: *The Seattle Times*, Seattle, Washington, September 12, 2001, p. 1**



Today: Sunny, pleasant. High 82, Low: 60. Thursday: Mostly sunny. High 82, Low: 56. Details, Page B10

Terrorists Hijack 4 Airliners, Destroy World Trade Center, Hit Pentagon; Hundreds Dead

Bodies Pulled From Pentagon; Troops Patrol District Streets

By STEVE TWOMEY and ARTHUR SANTANA Washington Post Staff Writers

Rescuers fought through tons of debris in quest of victims at the Pentagon last night after terrorists seized an airliner out-bound from Dulles International Airport and plunged it into the heart of American military power, killing an estimated several hundred people.

Hampered by fires that still raged as evening fell, emergency teams had carried out only six bodies, but they were preparing to remove many more, and rescuers were using dogs and listening devices to search for people they believed might be trapped alive. Precise figures were hard to come by because portions of the building were under construction, and many of the military and civilian personnel had been temporarily relocated, according to Arlington Fire Chief Edward P. Plaugher.

Coming less than an hour after two hijacked passenger jets slammed into the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center, the assault on the Pentagon began an unprecedented day of office and school closings, panicked phone calls, wild rumor and extraordinary security in the Washington area.

Last night, downtown streets were largely deserted as D.C. National Guard units joined police in patrolling the city. D.C. Mayor Anthony A. Williams (D), Maryland Gov. Parris N. Glendening (D) and Virginia Gov. James S. Gilmore III (R) declared states of emergency that broadened their power to govern without legislative authority.

Most of the region's school systems will be closed today, although President Bush announced that the federal government would reopen, after having shut down within an hour of yesterday's Pentagon attack.

At a late-evening news conference, D.C. Police Chief Charles H. Ramsey said that the attacks here and in New York would forever change security operations in Washington and that there was no longer such a thing as "business as usual" here.

Originally headed for Los Angeles, the American Airlines Boeing 757—carrying 61 people and loaded with 30,000 pounds of fuel for the long flight to the West Coast—



Minutes after an American Airlines plane crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City, a United airliner is about to hit the complex.



Firefighters battle blazes at the Pentagon, which was hit by a plane that had been hijacked after taking off from Dulles International Airport.

Bush Promises Retribution; Military Put on Highest Alert

By MICHAEL GRUNWALD Washington Post Staff Writer

Terrorists unleashed an astonishing air assault on America's military and financial power centers yesterday morning, hijacking four commercial jets and then crashing them into the World Trade Center in New York, the Pentagon and the Pennsylvania countryside.

There were no reliable estimates last night of how many people were killed in the most devastating terrorist operation in American history. The number was certainly in the hundreds and could be in the thousands.

It was the most dramatic attack on American soil since Pearl Harbor, and it created indelible scenes of carnage and chaos. The commandeered jets obliterated the World Trade Center's twin 110-story towers from their familiar perch above Manhattan's skyline and ripped a blazing swath through the Defense Department's imposing five-sided fortress, grounding the domestic air traffic system for the first time and plunging the entire nation into an unparalleled state of anxiety.

U.S. military forces at home and abroad were placed on their highest state of alert, and a loose network of Navy warships was deployed along both coasts for air defense.

The terrorists hijacked four California-bound planes from three airports on the Eastern Seaboard; the airliners were loaded with the maximum amount of fuel, suggesting a well-financed, well-coordinated plot. First, two planes slammed into the World Trade Center. Then an American Airlines plane out of Dulles International Airport ripped through the newly renovated walls of the Pentagon, perhaps the world's most secure office building. A fourth jet crashed 80 miles southeast of Pittsburgh, shortly after it was hijacked and turned in the direction of Washington.

None of the 283 people aboard the four planes survived. There were even more horrific but still untallied casualties in the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, which together provided office space for more than 70,000 people. At just one of the firms with offices in the World Trade Center, the Marsh & McLennan Insurance Bro-

See PENTAGON, A13, Col. 1

Washington On Flight 77: 'Our Plane Is Being Hijacked'

By MARG FISHER and DON PHILLIPS Washington Post Staff Writers

There was not even the grace of instant death. Instead, there was time to call from the sky over Virginia, fingers pumping cell phones, terrified passengers talking to loved ones for one final time.

Herded to the back of the plane by hijackers armed with knives and box-cutters, the passengers and crew members of American Airlines Flight 77—including the wife of Solicitor General Theodore Olson, a Senate staffer, three D.C. schoolchildren and three teachers on an educational field trip and a University Park family of four headed to Australia for a two-month adventure—were ordered to call relatives to say they were about to die.

About an hour after takeoff from Dulles International Airport yesterday morning, Flight 77, a Boeing 757 headed for Los Angeles with 64 people aboard, became a massive missile aimed at the White House. The target would change suddenly, but the symbolism was equally devastating.

By about 9:40 a.m., when the diving plane carved out a massive chunk of the Pentagon, its pas-



Shaken Pentagon worker Tracy Williams watches the flames.

able terror, hundreds died, and the nation's greatest symbol of security lay shattered, thick plumes of smoke camouflaging a gaping hole in its heart.

Barbara K. Olson, the former federal prosecutor who became a prominent TV commentator during the impeachment of President Bill Clinton, called her husband twice in the final minutes. Her last words to him were, "What do I tell

U.S. Intelligence Points To Bin Laden Network

By DAN EGGEN and VERNON LOEB Washington Post Staff Writers

The U.S. government has strong evidence from multiple sources that the suicidal terrorists who carried out yesterday's catastrophic attacks in New York and Washington were connected to Saudi fugitive Osama bin Laden, who previously was linked to the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, senior officials said.

One senior official said the probability that bin Laden is behind the deadly assaults is in "the high 90s," while another U.S. official said investigators gathered evidence "strongly suggesting" that bin Laden's organization, al Qaeda, was involved.

The evidence pointing to bin Laden was gathered following the attacks in a joint effort by the CIA and the FBI, with information from domestic and overseas sources, a senior official said.

It is more than just the analytical surmise that it would take an organization with incredible com-

mand and control capability, which bin Laden's has, to stage an attack like this," one U.S. official said. "There is other information that has been obtained after the attack against the World Trade Center pointing in the direction of bin Laden."

Unprecedented in scope and sophistication, the coordinated assault on the world's financial and political capitals caught the United States completely off guard—despite a massive intelligence and law enforcement network devoted to detecting and thwarting such attacks. With efforts focused largely on guarding against bomb threats to overseas targets, U.S. authorities conceded they were ill-prepared for hijacked jetliners purposely crashed on American soil.

Sen. Orrin G. Hatch (R-Utah), a member of the Senate intelligence committee, said he was told in a briefing that electronic intercepts yesterday showed "representatives affiliated with Osama bin Laden over the airwaves reporting that

See TERRORISTS, A20, Col. 1

New York 'I Saw Bodies Falling Out—Oh, God, Jumping, Falling'

By BARTON GELLMAN Washington Post Staff Writer

NEW YORK, Sept. 11—Valerie Johnson stared, transfixed, at the inferno a thousand yards to her south and west. Tears streamed furrows through a film of ash on her face. Her mind tried to grasp what her eyes beheld: a blazing gash across the tower of wealth that symbolized New York for her all her life. The fire marched downward, floor by floor, windows bursting out ahead of the flames.

Then Johnson screamed a guttural, wordless wail. A sound like nothing she ever heard—low as thunder, but louder and longer—pressed in on her chest for ten seconds or more, resounding through Centre Street at Foley Square. The northern tower, the taller of the two, was gone. It was 10:29 a.m., an hour and three quarters after the first of two jetliners ripped through New York's twin emblems of global prestige.

"Oh God, oh God, my niece works in that building," Johnson breathed. "Oh God."

Where we stood there now came a rolling cloud—smoke and ash, ten stories tall, billowing upward as they reached the canyons of Manhattan's southern tip. Survivors streamed, choked and gasping, behind the



Two women hold each other as they watch the World Trade Center burn.

blindly toward the fountain at Foley Square, where Elizabeth Belleau and Melissa Morales, strangers grasping hands with all their might as they ran. Belleau plunged her head into the cooling waters and retched, coughing out ash and phlegm. The fountain enclosed a sculpture: "Triumph of the Human Spirit."

Belleau had been running for nearly two hours. Her morning commute on the BM3 bus had stalled,

ATTACK ON AMERICA Guide to coverage, A2 Latest updates,





# THE PLAIN DEALER

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2001

LK GA LN SP ME LG

# TERROR HITS HOME

## Hijackers ram 2 airliners into World Trade Center, 3rd plane slams into Pentagon, 4th crashes near Pittsburgh; thousands die



Fiery blasts rock the World Trade Center after it was hit by two hijacked airplanes. Both of the 110-story towers were toppled in the deadly terrorist attack.

SPENCER PLATT | GETTY IMAGES

### Call loved ones, say you will die, passengers told

MARC FISHER AND DON PHILLIPS  
*Washington Post*

WASHINGTON — There was not even the grace of instant death. Instead, there was time to call from the sky over Virginia to loved ones, fingers pumping cell phones, voices saying quick goodbyes. Herded to the back of the plane by hijackers armed with knives and box cutters, the 64 passengers and crew of American Airlines Flight 77 — including the wife of Solicitor General Theodore Olson, a Senate staffer, three D.C. schoolchildren and three teachers on an educational field trip, and a suburban family of four headed to Australia for a two-month adventure — were ordered to call relatives to say they were about to die.

SEE CALL | A6



An emergency worker helps a woman injured in the attack on the World Trade Center.

GULNARASAMBOLAVA | ASSOCIATED PRESS

### Bush vows swift revenge

JOE FROLIK  
*Plain Dealer Reporter*

Terrorists unleashed a highly coordinated and deadly attack on America's political and financial capitals yesterday, altering the New York skyline, piercing the Pentagon and killing thousands in the worst attack on U.S. soil since Pearl Harbor.

By late evening, there were few answers as to how the assault had been plotted and carried out, who was responsible for it, even exactly how many had died. President Bush assured Americans that their government would be up and running again today, but it will take much longer before the shock of yesterday subsides.

Four commercial airliners, ap-

**EVIL COMES ASHORE:** It's time to master our fears, defeat our enemies. An editorial. **B10**

parently hijacked within minutes of one another along the East Coast, were turned into killing machines. Two of the planes crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, a third barreled into the Pentagon, and the last crashed 80 miles southeast of Pittsburgh on a trajectory that officials believe might have been carrying it toward the presidential retreat at Camp David, Md.

By 10:29 a.m., both World Trade Center towers had collapsed. The sun over Manhattan was hidden by dust and smoke;

screams and sobs echoed through its concrete canyons. Ash-coated survivors as they fled the grisly scene, mangled bodies lay in doorways and streets, and explosions forced rescuers to retreat. Police fired gunshots into the air to drive stunned onlookers from the scene.

At the Pentagon, the massive symbol and command center of American might, military personnel and civilians pulled the dead and injured from debris. Already the White House and the Capitol had been evacuated, airplanes had been grounded across the country and Americans, long complacent behind the barriers of two oceans, had learned just how vulnerable even they can be.

SEE ATTACK | A2



Classifieds ..... **B1**  
Deaths ..... **B6**  
Editorials ..... **B10**  
Weather ..... **B12**  
Plain Speaking  
and lottery on **A18**.

### 16 PAGES OF COVERAGE

### INSIDE

**THE HORROR:** Americans are shocked to see how vulnerable the nation has become. **A5**

**THE REGION:** Northeast Ohio shuts down. Some stop to pray and others donate blood. **A11**

**THE REACTION:** World condemns attacks. **A7**  
Sam Fulwood and other columnists. **A16, B11**

**THE GREED:** There's no gasoline shortage, but some Ohio stations are jacking up prices. **A3**



For news coverage and interactive forums



**Weather**  
Mostly sunny after  
morning fog. High, 75;  
low, 53. D R

# The Seattle Times

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# Terrorist attacks horrify nation

**AMERICA IN SHOCK**  
14 PAGES INSIDE

**Thousands of lives lost**



**4 jets crashed; Trade Center, Pentagon hit**

**'I looked down . . . I saw the horror'**  
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**Bush vows to avenge deaths**  
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**Suspect: Osama bin Laden**  
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**How intelligence, security failed**  
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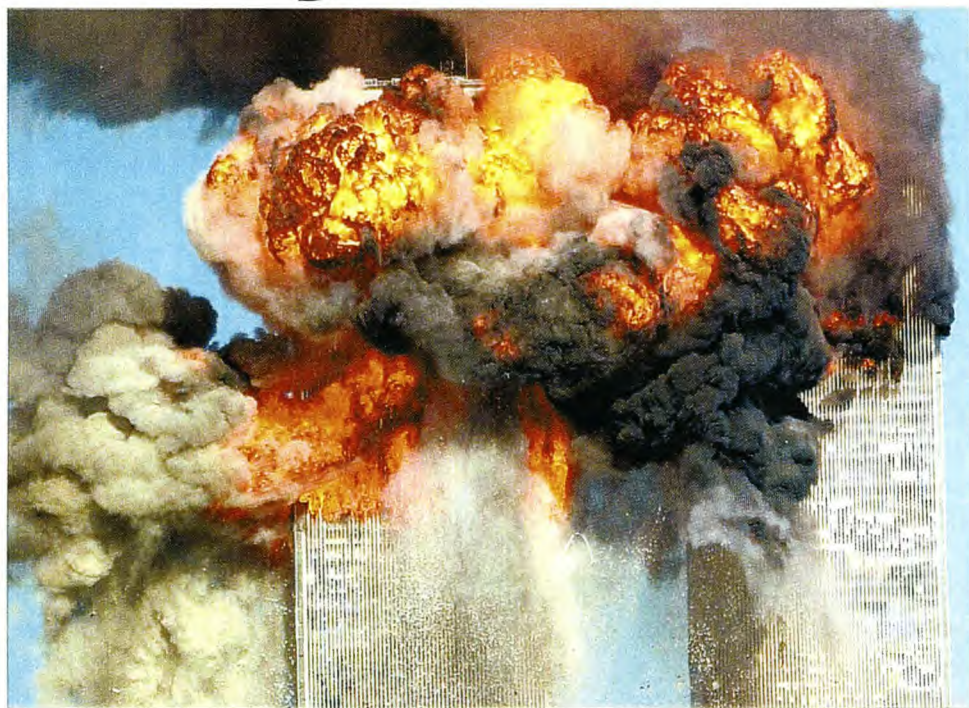
**Frantic loved ones search for relatives**  
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For continuing coverage, see  
**seattletimes.com**  
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A fiery blast rocks the World Trade Center in New York City yesterday after it was hit by two airplanes. Officials said casualties will be in the thousands.

## Closely timed attacks leave America in warlike state

BY DAVID CRAM AND JERIN SCHWARTZ  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — In the most devastating terrorist onslaught ever waged against the United States, knife-wielding hijackers crashed two airliners into the World Trade Center yesterday, toppling its twin 110-story towers.

The deadly calamity was witnessed on televisions across the world as another plane slammed into the Pentagon and a fourth crashed outside Pittsburgh.

"Today, our nation saw evil," President Bush said in an address to the nation last night. Bush said thousands of lives were "suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror."

Establishing the death toll could take weeks but is believed to be in the thousands.

No one took responsibility for the attacks that rocked the nation's seats of finance and government. But federal authorities identified Osama bin Laden, who has been given asylum by Afghanistan's Taliban rulers, as the prime suspect.

Aided by an intercept of communications between his supporters and harrowing cell-phone calls from at least one flight attendant and two passengers aboard the jetliners before they crashed, U.S. officials began assembling a case linking bin Laden to the devastation.

U.S. intelligence intercepted communications from bin Laden supporters discussing the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, according to Utah Sen. OGIN



A shell of what was once part of twin 110-story towers at the World Trade Center rises above the rubble, leaving a huge gap in the New York skyline.

## Destruction and death far away felt close to home

BY ALEX TZIVOS  
Seattle Times staff reporter

It happened on the other coast, yet yesterday's terrorist attacks reverberated like an underground quake through the region, uniting us with the rest of the country in a profound state of grief and apprehension.

As the magnitude became known yesterday, scenes of ordinary bustle mixed with the somber realization that we as a nation had entered a new era. War was no longer a thing that happened elsewhere.

Even as the sun shone brightly through a cloudless sky — what soggy Northwesters usually live for — many people stayed indoors, in homes and offices and restaurants and taverns, hovering around television sets, watching replays of the destruction

of one of the nation's most important economic symbols — the World Trade Center — and wondering about the death toll, what it all means, and what's next.

"I mostly feel it's nearness rather than its fairness," said Seattle author Jonathan Raban. "Insofar as terrorism sends a message, this message was not directed at New York or Washington, D.C., or Pittsburgh, but at the very idea of America, and Seattle is a part of that idea."

Much of Seattle appeared to go about busi-



**Addendum K: *The Spokesman-Review*, Spokane, Washington, September 12, 2001, p. 1**



# THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW



A jetliner hijacked by terrorists bears down on one of the towers of the World Trade Center in New York. The other tower had already been struck by another jet Tuesday morning.

# A NEW DAY OF INFAMY



PHOTO: BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

Firefighters comb through the rubble of the World Trade Center, which collapsed Tuesday after being struck by two hijacked jetliners as the nation and the world watched in horror.

## INSIDE 13 PAGES OF COVERAGE

### An icon reduced to rubble

Fire, not crash impact, suspected of bringing down New York's twin towers./A3

### SPECIAL SECTION

### Hijackers were trained pilots

Aviation experts say airline crews would die before flying jetliner into a building./A13

### 'Rogue state' aid suspected

Splinter group working alone not capable of such an elaborate operation./A13

### Disbelief, shock, fear, anger

Every American will have to confront attack's psychological effects./A16

### 'Overtaken by concern'

Spokesman-Review readers share their thoughts on the terrorist attacks./A16

### How you can help victims

Where you can donate blood, financial assistance; local services scheduled./A17

### Local Muslims cautious

Police concerned about possibility of backlash against Islamic community./A18

### BUSINESS

### Region's retailers react

Many stores close their doors Tuesday; air-dependent businesses crippled./A11

### Recession on traders' minds

Financial analysts divided on how attack will affect the struggling economy./A11

### SPORTS

### Events across U.S. postponed

Baseball schedule on hold; major college football games postponed./C1



An emergency worker helps a woman after she was injured in the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center.

119th year, No. 94  
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The Spokesman-Review

Spokane, Wash.,  
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho,  
and the Inland  
Northwest



## U.S. suffers worst act of terror in its history

Terrorists struck at the symbols of America's wealth and might Tuesday, flying hijacked airliners into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, killing untold thousands.

As a horrified nation watched, the twin towers of the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan collapsed into flaming rubble after two Boeing 767s rammed their upper stories. A third airliner, a Boeing 757, flattened one of the Pentagon's famed five sides.

A fourth hijacked jetliner crashed in western Pennsylvania.

The assaults which evoked comparisons to Pearl Harbor, were carefully planned and coordinated, occurring within 50 minutes. No one

claimed responsibility, but official suspicion quickly fell on Saudi fugitive Osama bin Laden.

President Bush vowed to "find those responsible and bring them to justice." This country, he said, would retaliate against "those behind these evil acts" and anyone harboring them.

Altogether, the four downed planes carried 311 people. All were killed. Scores jumped to their deaths or died in fire and the collapsing superstructure of the towers.

Bush placed U.S. forces around the world on highest alert after the worst siege of terrorism waged against the United States in its history.

Full coverage begins on page A2.



**Addendum L1: *USA Today*, September 12, 2001, p. 1**

**Addendum L2: *Hartford Courant*, Hartford, Connecticut, September 12, 2001, p. 1**



Wednesday, September 12, 2001

Special Report

37 pages on America's day of terror



NO. 1 IN THE USA

Carnage in New York

Horror, disbelief and tears cascade city. 6A

Pentagon in flames

Jetliner tears into symbol of U.S. might. 7A

'Tears most of the day'

Coast to coast, Americans turn to each other. 8A

# 'Act of war'

## Terrorists strike; death toll 'horrendous'

### Bush to nation: U.S. 'saw evil'

Vows to avenge strikes. 3A

### Crowds rush blood centers

Touching response. 10D

### Crisis deepens economic woes

'The wrong time.' 1B

### 86% say attacks are acts of war

USA TODAY/CNN Poll 2A

### Drama of day in pictures

Color pullout. 10-11A



Second impact: Flames and debris explode from a World Trade Center tower as a jetliner slams into the structure Tuesday. Both towers in Manhattan collapsed into a pile of rubble shortly thereafter.

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Newsline 3A  
Money 1B  
Sports 1C  
Life 1D  
Crossword 11D  
Editorial 1B-15A  
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## Minute by minute, fear envelops the country

### As jetliners strike U.S. landmarks, America's sense of security is shattered

It may have been the bloodiest day in U.S. history, when our two biggest office towers were obliterated and the Pentagon, symbol of our military authority, was ripped open like an egg carton.

Our commercial jetliners were turned into weapons of mass murder, and we had to stop doing things we always do, from trading stocks to going to Disney World.

People ran through the ash-covered streets of lower Manhattan like extras in a nuclear winter fantasy, chased by a mighty cloud of dust and debris from the office towers they once occupied. Others, some on fire, jumped from 30, 40, 80 stories. One couple held hands as they leapt.

Even if Sept. 11, 2001, was not our deadliest day, it was surely our worst. Americans talked of "a second Pearl Harbor" and "an act of war," but the comparisons faltered.

This time it was civilians dying in the nation's political and financial centers, not soldiers and sailors in a distant Pacific territory. This time the targets were not outdated battleships, but buildings familiar to every schoolchild.

And if this really was war — 86% of Americans in a USA TODAY/CNN Gallup Poll Tuesday said it was — who was the enemy? What did he want? When was the next battle?

Suspicion focused on an individual, indicted Saudi terrorist Osama Bin Laden, not a nation.

As some called for a congressional declaration of war, Rep. Jim Moran of Virginia asked, "Who do you declare war on?"

History will find that something about America changed at 9 a.m. Tuesday, predicted John Morton Blum, a retired Yale historian and World War II scholar.

"Americans aren't used to being in a war zone," he said. "From here on,

they are. No superpower has ever been hit like this."

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., struck an apocalyptic note: "I don't think our lifestyles will be the same for a long time."

The prime casualty was America's sense of safety. When Arab terrorists bombed the World Trade Center 8 years ago, six people died, and the complex came back better than ever.

But by noon Tuesday, the Trade Center looked like a smoldering dump and America looked like a nation in retreat — office workers ran up Broadway, and men and women in uniform walked from the Pentagon past Arlington National Cemetery and the two Jima Marine Memorial. They glanced fearfully behind them, as though afraid of what

"Pearl Harbor brought us together to face a problem. Maybe this can do the same."

—Former Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger.

See COVER STORY next page >



# ACT OF WAR

## WITH CHILLING PRECISION, TERRORISTS DELIVER DEATH AS AMERICA WATCHES HELPLESSLY



AFP

ARMED WITH NOTHING but a fire extinguisher, an unidentified man makes his way through the rubble of the twin towers of the World Trade Center, shouting for victims who needed assistance. The towers disappeared from the Manhattan skyline Tuesday after being hit by hijacked passenger airplanes.

BY EDMUND MAHONY / COURANT STAFF WRITER

America's sense of security was smashed with apocalyptic fury Tuesday when the most destructive and meticulously planned terror attack in history shattered two of the country's most potent symbols.

Shortly after leaving Boston, American Airlines Flight 11 to Los Angeles banked south near Albany and raced down the Hudson River

Valley. It plummeted from a crystal blue bowl of morning sky and punched a hole through the north tower of the World Trade Center, the heart of the nation's financial nerve center in lower Manhattan.

It was 8:45 a.m., the start of a series of calamitous attacks that brought the nation face to face with its vulnerability. With the twin towers toppled in New York, the Pentagon

burning, a jetliner down in Pennsylvania, the morning's cruel work ended the nation's normalcy.

"Today, our nation saw evil," a grim-faced President Bush said Tuesday night during his first prime-time address from the Oval Office. He promised that the United States will avenge its thousands of terror victims by retaliating against "those behind these evil acts," and

any country that harbors them.

There were four planes hijacked by presumed terrorists Tuesday, and four accompanying disasters that caused unfathomable carnage. Rescue experts would only speculate that the death toll could reach well into the thousands. The four planes alone carried 266 people, and

PLEASE SEE A NATION, PAGE A3

"If you can do this to the USA and get at two symbols of the strength of America, that tells you essentially we are at war."

- SEN. CHUCK HAGEL, R-NEB.

### Complete Coverage

They fatally struck our two capitals - financial and political - with no warning, devastating Americans and shocking much of the world. Reports from New York, Washington, Boston and Connecticut, and reactions from abroad.

Pages A1 through A15.



### Nowhere To Run

### The Fallout

We've just started grappling with an altered sense of who we are, and where we go from here.

Pages AA1-AA8.

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**Addendum M: *The Examiner*, San Fransisco, California, September 12, 2001, p. 1**



# SPECIAL EDITION

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## The Examiner.

Wednesday, September 12, 2001

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### A CHANGED AMERICA



**Addendum N1: *The Post-Crescent*, Appleton, Wisconsin, September 12, 2001, p. 1**

**Addendum N2: *Skagit Valley Herald*, Mount Vernon, Washington, September 12, 2001, p. 1**



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**U.S. UNDER ATTACK: 10-PAGE SPECIAL SECTION**

## 'UNYIELDING ANGER'

President Bush says America will not falter in face of horrific terrorist assault / Page 2



### Inside



■ Establishing U.S. death toll could take weeks

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■ Investigation targets five terrorist groups, Osama bin Laden

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■ Leaders in Congress make a show of unity

Page 3

■ U.S. air defense not prepared for a suicide attack

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■ Tragedy could plunge weak economy into a recession

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■ New Yorkers with Fox Valley connections weigh in

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■ Attack stirs emotions in Fox Valley

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■ Lines form amid fears of rising gas prices

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■ Editorials, columns

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■ Photos recount a day of horrors

Page 10



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**FIREFIGHTERS RAISE A FLAG** at the remains of the World Trade Center Tuesday in New York City. A coordinated terrorist attack sent two hijacked jetliners straight into the landmark skyscrapers, toppling them. Thousands of people could be dead or trapped in the rubble, and Lower Manhattan was evacuated as the nation coped with a similar attack on the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. AP photo by Thomas E. Franke



TERROR IN AMERICA: Complete coverage inside, A3-14

# Skagit Valley Herald

WEDNESDAY  
SEPTEMBER 12, 2001

A locally owned newspaper serving Northwest Washington since 1884

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# Who did it?

## 700 leads in probe of terrorist attacks

By JOHN SOLOMON  
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The FBI has received 700 leads in the investigation of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington but no arrests have been made, a Justice Department official said today.

The government believes the hijackers were trained pilots and that three to five were aboard each of four airliners that crashed Tuesday in the worst terrorist attack ever in the United States, said Justice Department spokeswoman Mindy Tucker. She said the conclusion was based on information gathered from frantic phone calls made by passengers on the doomed jets.

"It appears from what we know that the hijackers were skilled pilots," said Tucker.

Tucker declined to comment on evidence linking the attacks to Saudi exile Osama bin Laden or whether authorities have executed search warrants.

Lawmakers believe bin Laden may have been behind the attacks. "I don't think everyone in Congress has enough information to make those assumptions," said Tucker.

She said investigators are following all credible leads, but declined to comment on whether the government is close to arresting anyone. The 700 tips came from a special FBI Web site seeking information on the attacks.

The FBI interviewed a Venice, Fla., couple today about two men who stayed at their house for a week in July 2000 while the men were taking small-plane flight training at Venice Municipal Airport.

FBI agents "informed me that there were two individuals that were students at Huffman Aviation, my employer, and FBI told me they were involved in yesterday's tragedy," said Charlie Voss, who was interviewed with his wife, Drew Voss, at their home.

The couple accepted the two men as house guests as a favor to the company, Voss said. The men, who stayed just a few days, trained at the

See PROBE, Page A13



Three New York City firefighters raise the American flag in the rubble of the World Trade Center late Tuesday afternoon. Both towers of the Trade Center collapsed after being struck by two hijacked jetliners Tuesday morning.

## Locally, security remains high on state ferries, Whidbey base

By SCOTT GUTIERREZ  
Staff Writer

Life got back to normal for mall shoppers and ferry passengers today, but security at the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station got even tougher.

Naval personnel on their way to work were experiencing traffic delays because the base was under the highest level of security today, said Kim Martin, public affairs officer.

All cars were inspected thoroughly, and in some cases with the aid of dogs trained to sniff for explosives, Martin said.

"We're doing everything to protect our people and our assets here," Martin said.

Only essential personnel were allowed on base and only essential air operations will be performed, Martin said.

The inspections severely congested traffic this morning for those entering the base, Martin said. She said two gates are opened, the Charles Porter and the Saratoga gates.

A shuttle bus from Rocky Point, near Gold Course Road, also will take people onto the base, Martin said.

Meanwhile shoppers and employees returned to Cascade Mall in Burlington, which resumed normal business hours after being closed Tuesday.

The state ferry system returned to carrying automobiles Tuesday after being restricted to passenger-only service through the afternoon in most of the Puget Sound outside the San Juan Islands, said spokesperson Susan Harris.

But state troopers were on hand at both the terminals and on the vessels to inspect any vehicles that appear suspicious, Harris said.

"All vehicles may be subject to a possible search," Harris said.

On the ground, Amtrak trains resumed normal service to the area today after a thorough inspection of the state's railroads, bridges and roadways by Department of Transportation and Amtrak officials.

"Inspections will be running throughout the day and should anything unusual happen, they will take strong precautions," spokesperson Stan Suchan said about service today. "And that could mean some

See SECURITY, Page A13

## Trade Center fell 'like a house of cards'

By JAMES GELLUSO  
Staff Writer

Ben Luce was at work Tuesday morning in the Commodities Exchange building, two blocks from the World Trade Center, when a co-worker came in and told people that something had happened.

Luce, a natural gas trader and 1994 Stanwood

High School graduate, joined his colleagues around a television, where they watched live footage of the second airplane crashing into the World Trade Center.

Not long after that, the exchange building was evacuated, and Luce and his colleagues saw the destruction up close.

"We just kind of stood in shock for about 15

minutes," he said.

Two of his colleagues started walking north toward midtown Manhattan, and the rest followed. They had gotten 20 blocks when they heard a low rumble and turned around to see the first tower fall.

See STANWOOD, Page A12



Ben Luce in 1994.

## Hijackings hit home for school official

By PETER KELLEY  
Staff Writer

CONCRETE — As Marie Phillips watched Tuesday's horrific events unfold, she remembered her own days as a flight attendant, and a life-and-death crisis she faced one day, thousands of feet in the air.

Phillips is superintendent of the Concrete School District now, but in 1968 she was a 22-year-old flight attendant for Pan American Airlines. She remembers vividly how her crew dealt with a bomb threat on an

See HIJACKINGS, Page A13



Frank Varga / Skagit Valley Herald

Alice White of Mount Vernon reacts to the terrorist attack on the United States before the start of noon Mass Tuesday at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Mount Vernon.

## Worshippers find solace in tune from World War II era

By JIM FEEHAN  
Staff Writer

MOUNT VERNON — At the end of a well-attended mass, a spontaneous lone voice singing "God Bless America" quickly was joined by a choir of parishioners seeking spiritual relief from the day's events.

June Hudson didn't plan to start singing the patriotic song at the conclusion of a noontime Mass Tuesday at Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church in Mount Vernon.

But as the Rev. Patrick McDermott ended the religious service and turned to walk away from

See SONG, Page A12

### Inside

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Internet: www.skagitvalleyherald.com

### Weather

Mostly fair through Friday with highs in the 70s and 80s. Details, A14.



**Addendum O: *The Iwo Jima Flag* by Joe Rosenthal, 1945**

(from: Buell, Hal. 1999. *Moments – the Pulitzer prize-winning photographs – a visual chronicle of our time*. New York: Könemann)



