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Bush: 'We're At War'

As The Deadliest Attack on American Soil in History Opens A Scary New Kind Of Conflict, The Manhunt Begins

BY EVAN THOMAS AND MARK HOSENBALL | NEWSWEEK

From the magazine issue dated Sep 24, 2001

(p. 1) Such a polite, neat young man. He brought his landlord coffee and cookies. He remembered to use his frequent-flier number when he bought his ticket from Boston to Los Angeles--business class. And a good student, too, reported his flight instructor, though he seemed more interested in turning the plane than landing it. A little standoffish, maybe, but he could knock back a vodka with his buddies. So it was uncharacteristic for Mohamed Atta to be running a little behind when he boarded American Airlines Flight 11 on Tuesday shortly before 8 a.m. One of his bags never made it aboard, but maybe that was intentional, too, for inside was a suicide note. The FBI believes that Atta was in control when Flight 11 crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center, but maybe not. The hijackers had an abundance of piloting talent--four of the five terrorists aboard had some flight training. Indeed, there were enough hijackers with piloting skills to fly four airliners--two for New York, and two for Washington.

(p. 2) At the White House on that beautiful, clear morning, the occupants were running for their lives. Vice President Dick Cheney had already been hustled into a bunker designed to withstand the shock of a nuclear blast when, at about 9:30 a.m., Secret Service men told staffers leaving the West Wing to run, not walk, as far away as possible. "There's a plane overhead, don't look back!" shouted a policeman. Agents were yelling at women to shed their high-heeled shoes so they could run faster. Several staffers saw a civilian airliner, reflecting white in the bright sunlight, appearing to circle nearby. Perhaps unable to spot the White House, the hijackers at the control of American Airlines Flight 77 dive-bombed the Pentagon instead.

(p. 3) How could a small band of religious zealots knock down the World Trade Center, the most visible symbol of capitalism, killing thousands in lower Manhattan, and come so close to destroying the executive mansion of the most powerful nation on earth? Part of the answer is that few U.S. government officials really believed they could. Consider the dazed reaction of top officials of the Federal Aviation Administration, the agency charged with safely controlling the nation's airways. Although a couple of aircraft had been behaving erratically on the radar screens of flight controllers for at least 15 minutes, officials at FAA headquarters did not suspect that a hijacking had occurred until the second plane, United Airlines Flight 175, rammed the South Tower of the World Trade Center at 9:05. A half hour later, when the third plane, American Flight 77, hit the Pentagon, the FAA officials responded in classic bureaucratic fashion. "Get out your security manuals," ordered one top official. The officials dutifully began reading their manuals to determine who among them were deemed "essential" and should stay and work, and who should go home for the day.

(p. 4) U.S. Air Force fighter planes did not arrive to protect the nation's capital for another 15 minutes. Pentagon officials had watched helplessly as the suicide airliner bore in on the nation's military command center. In the chaotic aftermath, the plane at the greatest risk of getting shot down was the one flying the attorney general of the United States. At least that's the way it seemed to the pilot, David Clemmer, a Vietnam combat veteran who received a warning as he flew the nation's chief law-enforcement officer, John Ashcroft, back to Washington from an aborted speaking engagement in the Midwest. Land your plane immediately, Clemmer was instructed by an air-traffic controller, or risk getting shot down by the U.S. Air Force. Clemmer turned to an FBI agent assigned to guard Ashcroft and said, "Well, Larry, we're in deep kimchi here, and basically, all the rules you and I know are out the window." The pilot notified air-traffic controllers that he was carrying the attorney general--but was worried that the message wouldn't get through to military commanders controlling the airspace around Washington. "Thinking out of the box," as Clemmer put it, he asked for--and got--a fighter escort into Washington. His plane, guarded by an F-16, was one of the last to land on the East Coast that day.

(p. 5) Within a day or two, the haplessness, the confusion, the mentality of "it can't happen here" had been wiped away, perhaps forever. An aircraft carrier patrolled off New York Harbor, past the skyline so horrifically sundered by the destruction of the World Trade Center. Washington was an armed camp on hair-trigger alert. "We're at war," declared President George W. Bush. "We will not only deal with those who dare attack America, we will deal with those who harbor them and feed them and house them." The FBI had launched the largest manhunt in history, code-named PENTTBOM (for Pentagon and Twin Towers), tracking the suspected 19 suicide bombers and their backers around the nation and abroad. Intelligence officials told NEWSWEEK that they feared that between 30 and 50 teams of terrorists were still on the loose. It was hard to tell if the threat was real, or if America was gripped with the sort of frenzy that seized the nation after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor--and many citizens assumed that Japanese troops would soon be marching on Chicago. Northwest Airlines confirmed that flight attendants were staying away from work in droves. And bomb scares became routine. By Saturday, FBI agents had detained 25 people wanted for questioning on immigration violations and issued arrest warrants for two other "material witnesses."

(p. 6) Congress will no doubt hold hearings to assign the fault for a massive failure of intelligence. At the CIA, NEWSWEEK has learned, officials looked at the Justice Department's list of dead hijackers aboard American Flight 77, the plane that hit the Pentagon, and recognized three of them as terrorism suspects. ("Oh s--t," exclaimed one official.) In late August, the agency had asked the FBI to find two of the men, one of whom was believed to be connected to a suspect in the October 2000 bombing of the destroyer the USS Cole. But the FBI was still looking when the hijackers struck.

(p. 7) The blame game will go on. But the finger-pointing may miss a darker and more troubling truth about the shocking attack. It is very difficult for a free and

open society to defend against terrorists who are at once patient, smart and willing to die. The operatives run by Al Qaeda, the terrorist organization that reports to bin Laden, appear to be all three. As the PENTTBOM investigation exposes the sophisticated and long-conceived suicide plot, a portrait of evil genius emerges.

(p. 8) It is often said that Islamic extremists wish to turn back history. They want to destroy the Western modernity that threatens to eclipse their fantasy of an 11th-century theocracy. But, like a judo expert who leverages his opponent's superior weight and mass against him, Islamic terrorists have found a diabolically clever way to flip the Great Satan on his back. Blending into American society for months and even years, quietly awaiting the signal to move, bin Laden's operatives have learned how to turn two of America's greatest strengths--openness and technology--into weapons against the American people. Armed with pocket knives, they transformed U.S. airliners into guided missiles, flying bombs packed with 60,000 gallons of explosive fuel. That feat, while awesome, could be just the beginning. Talking on cell phones and by encrypted e-mail, operatives in bin Laden's far-flung network can communicate from Afghanistan to Miami with little risk of immediate detection. It is chilling to think what they could accomplish if they get their hands on the acme of Western military science, the nuclear bomb. Without doubt, they are trying.

(p. 9) "The ability to take our expertise and turn it on us is exhilarating to them," says Sen. Ron Wyden, a member of the Senate intelligence committee. "They stay at it and stay at it to learn how to defeat our technological systems. It's like rattling doors through the neighborhood, looking for one to break in. That's what they're doing with our technology." The lock to America's rickety, overburdened air-control system was especially easy to pick. But America's water and electrical supplies aren't much better safeguarded. And teenage computer hackers have already demonstrated how to use the wide-open Internet to wreck cyberhavoc on American businesses and homes.

(p.10) For all their professed devotion to medieval religiosity, the terrorists themselves appear to have comfortably blended into American culture. They do not appear to be poor, or desperate or down on their luck, like the stereotype of a young Arab man drawn to the false promise of entering Paradise through martyrdom. At least one of the 19 had a family, and all apparently lived comfortable middle-class lives, with enough money to rent cars, go to school and violate the Quran's ban on alcohol by visiting the occasional bar. A senior European intelligence official told NEWSWEEK that some of the hijackers may have had Swiss bank accounts, which have now been frozen by Swiss authorities. Two of the alleged hijackers aboard Flight 93, Ahmed Alhaznawi and Ziad Jarrahi, drove a Ford Ranger and lived in a quiet neighborhood in Lauderdale-by-the-Sea, Fla. In front of the house was a wooden wind chime carrying the message this house is full of love. NEWSWEEK has learned that the Pentagon has referred to the FBI reports that three of the hijackers may have received help from Uncle Sam--as trainees at Pensacola Naval Air Station in Florida; two others may have studied at Air Force facilities.

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(p. 10a) A president's popularity always rises in a crisis, but Bush's spike is unprecedented. In the Newsweek poll, 82 % approve of how he's doing his job.

(p. 11) Osama bin Laden, their spiritual leader and financier, comes from a privileged background himself. One of more than 50 children of Yemeni billionaire parents who got rich off construction contracts in Saudi Arabia, Osama, for a time, made money on those most Western of beverages, Coke and Pepsi. During the early '90s, while he lived in Sudan, he owned part of a company that produced gum arabic, an essential ingredient of many soft drinks. Bin Laden may not have a vast personal fortune, at least not the \$300 million ascribed to him, but he is able to secure funds from nefarious sources. According to intelligence sources, his agents are involved in drug running and he receives "blood money" payment from frightened Arab regimes that want to buy protection from his zealotry. According to U.S. intelligence sources, bin Laden is able to pay pensions to the families of suicide bombers.

(p. 12) Mohamed Atta was, according to investigators, the perfect soldier in bin Laden's army. He was a citizen of the world. Traveling on a passport from the United Arab Emirates, he lived in Germany for a time, studying at the Technical University in Hamburg. He frequented a nightspot named Sharky's Billiard Bar ("the Bar With Mega-Possibilities"), wore black jeans, and rented--but failed to return--a video of John Carpenter's "Vampire." At the same time, he requested and received a prayer room at the university for himself and about 20 other Muslim students. In the last two years, he began to wear Muslim dress.

(p. 13) Atta, 33, may have had a shadowy past. According to German authorities, he is suspected in the bombing of an Israeli bus in 1986, when he was only 18 or 19 years old. If true, he should have been denied immigration visas. Instead, he was able to move freely between Germany and the United States. He was clearly preparing for some sort of terrorist action for months. According to law-enforcement authorities, he may have begun casing Logan Airport in Boston more than six months ago. And, NEWSWEEK has learned, he was seen last winter in Norfolk, Va., where, the FBI believes, he may have been surveying the giant U.S. Navy base as a target. Already, say investigators, there are important links between the hijackers who attacked American targets last week and the plotters who tried to sink the USS Cole in Yemen last October.

(p. 14) Atta had plenty of cash. He wrote a \$10,000 check to take flight lessons at one of Florida's many flight schools. (Because of its year-round good weather and proximity to the beach, Florida attracts many international flight students, especially from the Middle East; background checks are said to be minimal.) Last December, he and another man paid \$1,500 for six hours in a Boeing 727 simulator. "Looking back at it, it was a little strange that all they wanted to do was turns," Henry George, who runs SimCenter, Inc., at Opa-Locka Airport, told The Miami Herald. "Most people who come here want to do takeoffs and landings."

(p. 15) At the time, Atta aroused no suspicion. When he turned in his rent-a-car in Pompano Beach, Fla., on Sept. 9, before heading north on his suicide mission, he reminded the dealer, Brad Warrick, that the car needed to be serviced. "The only thing out of the ordinary," Warrick recalled, "was that he was nice enough to let me know the car needed an oil change." Atta and several friends were regulars at a Venice bar called the 44th Aero Squadron, decorated in the motif of a bomber-squadron bunker, complete with sandbags. "I never had any problems with them," said the owner, Ken Schortzmann. They didn't want to be bothered, but didn't drink heavily and flirt with the waitresses, like some of the other flight students. Atta seemed to be the leader. "He had a fanny pack with a big roll of cash in it," said Schortzmann.

(p. 16) Last week Atta and two of his buddies seem to have gone out for a farewell bender at a seafood bar called Shuckums. Atta drank five Stolli-and-fruit-juices, while one of the others drank rum and Coke. For once, Atta and his friends became agitated, shouting curse words in Arabic, reportedly including a particularly blasphemous one that roughly translates as "F--k God." There was a squabble when the waitress tried to collect the \$48 bill (her shift was ending and she wanted her tip). One of the Arabs became indignant. "I work for American Airlines. I'm a pilot," he said. "What makes you think I'd have a problem paying the bill?"

(p. 17) Although investigators now suspect that Atta may have been the leader of his cell, it is not clear if and when he was, in effect, "triggered." The pattern of bin Laden's terrorism is to insert operatives into a country where they are "sleepers," burrowed deep into the local culture, leading normal lives while awaiting orders. Intelligence sources believe that one or two control agents run by bin Laden's Qaeda may have slipped into the United States in the last couple of weeks to activate the airliner plot. The idea of using suicide pilots may have been germinating for a very long time. One of the other pilot-hijackers on Flight 11, Waleed Alshehri, attended flight school in Florida in 1997. Last week FBI Director Robert Mueller told a news conference, "The fact that they received flight training in the U.S. is news." But maybe it shouldn't have been. Only last September an Orlando, Fla., cabdriver named Ihab Ali was indicted for refusing to answer questions about his ties to the bin Laden organization, including his "pilot training in Oklahoma," according to court papers. Indeed, the records of the terrorism trial in New York for the August 1998 bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa offer a wealth of information about bin Laden's use of U.S.-trained pilots. One of them, Essam Al-Ridi, who had been trained at a Texas flight school, was a key government witness, testifying that bin Laden's associates used him to try to buy a private jet to transport Stinger ground-to-air missiles from Pakistan to Sudan.

(p. 18) It is not known exactly how many of bin Laden's operatives are still on the loose. One of the most intriguing suspects may be Amer Mohammed Kamfar, 41. Last winter or fall, he showed up in Florida and took flight lessons at FlightSafety Academy. He rented a house in Vero Beach, where he had a wife, who dressed in the traditional chador, and several children. Kamfar, who called himself "John,"

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"shopped at Wal-Mart and ate a lot of pizza," according to a neighbor. Two weeks ago he packed up his family and left the area. Last week Florida cops put out an all-points bulletin, warning that Kamfar may be toting an AK-47.

(p. 19) Two of the suicide bombers may have just slipped out of the federal government's grasp. According to intelligence sources, on Aug. 21 the CIA passed along information to the Immigration and Naturalization Service on a man who belonged on the watch list for terror suspects. The man, Khalid al-Midhar, had been videotaped in Kuala Lumpur talking to one of the suspected terrorists in the Cole bombing (the man is now in jail in Yemen). When the INS ran its database, it found that al-Midhar was already inside the United States. The CIA asked the FBI to find him and an associate, Salem Alhamzi. But the bureau didn't have much to go on. They listed their U.S. residence as "the Marriott Hotel in New York." There are 10 Marriott-run hotels in New York. The bureau checked all of them and found nothing. Al-Midhar and Alhamzi were listed among the five hijackers of American Airlines Flight 77.

(p. 20) Ever since the Customs Service foiled an apparent bomb plot on the eve of the millennium, U.S. intelligence has been very edgy about an attack on America. The man caught crossing between British Columbia and Seattle with explosives and timers in his car, Ahmed Ressam, later confessed that he planned to blow up Los Angeles International Airport. Ressam allegedly worked for a shadowy group of Algerian terrorists with ties to bin Laden. Twice a week, the "Threat Committee," a group of top intelligence officials and diplomats, meets in the White House complex to review dozens of terrorist threats at home and abroad. In late June the CIA warned of possible terrorist action against U.S. targets, including those in the United States, for the Fourth of July. Nothing happened, but then in July the agency again warned about possible attacks overseas. The threat seemed grave enough to force U.S. ships in Middle Eastern ports to head for sea. Three weeks ago there was another warning that a terrorist strike might be imminent. But there was no mention of where. On Sept. 10, NEWSWEEK has learned, a group of top Pentagon officials suddenly canceled travel plans for the next morning, apparently because of security concerns.

(p. 21) But no one even dreamed that four air-liners would be hijacked and plunged into targets in New York and Washington. Some officials complain that the intelligence community has been too focused on terrorists obtaining weapons of mass destruction--biological, chemical and nuclear--while overlooking low-tech threats--like the use of penknives and box cutters to hijack a plane.

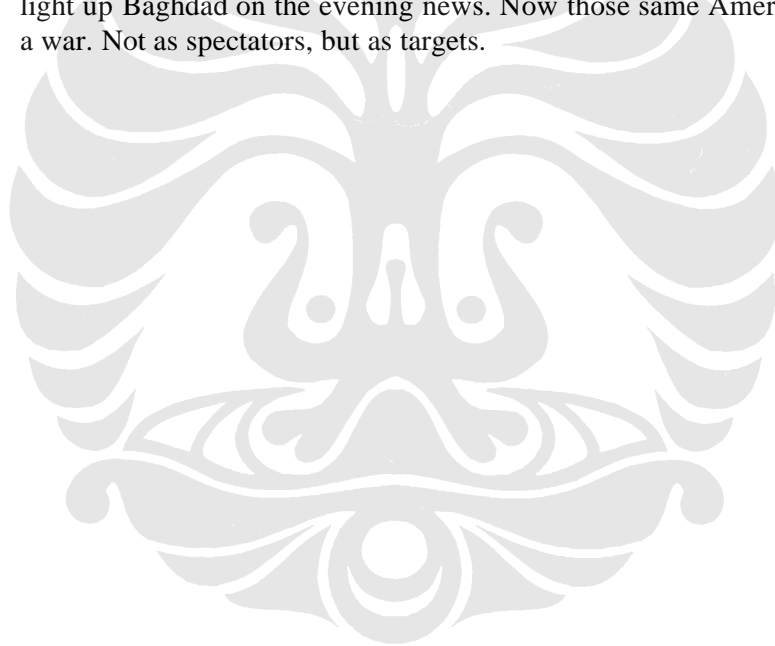
(p. 22) The Threat Committee has every reason to worry about bin Laden's trying to get hold of a nuke. During the New York trial of the men accused of bombing the embassies in Africa, one bin Laden associate testified that the boss had hatched a 1993 plan to spend \$1.5 million to buy black-market uranium. He apparently failed--that time.

(p. 23) Now the Bush administration and Congress seemed primed to do just about anything to foil future attacks. Justice Department lawyers have been told to

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take a fresh look at "everything," one official said. Perhaps the most startling idea under examination would be a new presidential order authorizing secret military tribunals to try accused terrorists. The idea first occurred to former attorney general William Barr after the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988. Barr, at the time chief of the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel, got the idea after learning that his office was used during World War II to try--in secret--German saboteurs who were later hanged. The idea was rejected, but it's being revived on the theory that terrorists are de facto military "combatants" who don't deserve the full run of constitutional rights.

(p. 24) Civil libertarians may balk, but never underestimate the desire for revenge. Consider some statistics: more people were killed by the suicide hijackers last week than the number of American soldiers killed in the entire American Revolution. Or at Antietam, the bloodiest one-day battle of the Civil War. Or at Pearl Harbor. Or on D-Day. And those were soldiers. War had become more and more remote and sterile to Americans who experienced combat as a phenomenon that occurred on TV, either in movies or occasionally by watching cruise missiles light up Baghdad on the evening news. Now those same American civilians are in a war. Not as spectators, but as targets.



Training For Terror

From Credit-Card Fraud To The Art Of Disguise, How Bin Laden Schools His Recruits In Mayhem. An Inside Look

By CHRISTOPHER DICKEY | NEWSWEEK

From the magazine issue dated Sep 24, 2001

(p. 1) Afghanistan is famous for its honey. Farmers build hives among its unyielding mountains and let the bees fly where they will. Apart from opium and terrorism, the sweet gold stuff is one of the country's few exports. In the guise of a honey merchant, one of Osama bin Laden's closest aides traveled to the Pakistani city of Peshawar throughout the 1990s. His mission was to screen would-be holy warriors before assigning them to the kind of terrorist cells that would blow up American embassies in Africa, a U.S. warship in Yemen and ultimately stage the horrendous attacks on New York and Washington.

(p. 2) But insane as these acts may seem, the honey merchant known as Abu Zubaida was not looking for madmen. Some recruits would best serve the cause by forging documents or moving money. Others might be good with guns or at making bombs. Only a few would be trained, eventually, to blow themselves to bits in suicide attacks on America and its allies.

(p. 3) Abu Zubaida, a tall Gaza Palestinian who lost his sight in one eye fighting Russians in Afghanistan, rarely had to look far for volunteers. From Algeria and Germany, Yemen and France, the Emirates and Sweden, they found their way to him. Each time a spectacular attack sent shock waves through the West, new recruits arrived. True believers, they imagined themselves at the vanguard of their own.

(p. 4) Court documents in the United States and Europe, and exclusive NEWSWEEK interviews with former bin Laden associates, give a clear picture of how these young men are turned into terrorists, and how they learn to operate.

(p. 5) For many, the path to the Afghan camps begins in front of their home televisions. What they see convinces them Muslims are besieged, humiliated and annihilated around the globe, whether by Serbs in Bosnia, Russians in Chechnya, Hindus in Kashmir or Israelis in Palestine. At local mosques, and on the Internet, young zealots vow to defend the faith. Some raise money for nongovernmental organizations that support their cause. Some just spoil for a fight. Some take up contributions for a ticket to Peshawar.

(p. 6) Ahmed Ressay, a 34-year-old Algerian who was caught with powerful explosives at the U.S.-Canadian border a few days before the millennium (his target was Los Angeles International Airport) is like many Afghan-trained terrorists. Egotism is as much a force in their lives as Islam. They may convince themselves that they are personified agents of God Almighty. Their reading of the Quran may promise them a quick trip to Paradise. But these 21st-century terrorists

are hoping for media impact, too. Members of Ressam's family told NEWSWEEK last year that he had trouble holding a job and spent hours watching Clint Eastwood videos. Ressam tried to join the Algerian police or military security before he opted for holy war.

(p. 7) When Ressam arrived in Peshawar in early 1998 he was vetted by Abu Zubaida, given Afghan clothes and a guide, and sent to the Khalden camp just across the border in Afghanistan. Over the course of the next six months, the camp population varied from 50 to 100 people, grouped together depending on the country they came from. They trained with weapons and ammunition bought from the Taliban. They learned "how to blow up the infrastructure of a country," Ressam testified in July at the trial of a co-conspirator: "Electric plants, gas plants, airports, railroads, large corporations... Hotels where conferences are held." They watched their trainers kill a dog in a box with homemade cyanide gas, and learned how this crude chemical weapon could be placed near the air intakes of office and apartment buildings.

(p. 8) Ressam, now serving a 130-year sentence, is cooperating with U.S. officials in hopes it will be reduced. He said he was taught surveillance techniques and shown how to disguise himself as a tourist taking pictures. He was told to avoid obviously Islamic dress, and even mosques, once he was back in the field. But in the camps many ostensible *fatwas*, or religious decrees, including one by the blind Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman, who is serving a prison term in the United States, were distributed to justify attacks on "Americans and their interests everywhere."

(p. 9) The Algerian group at Khalden camp was broken down into cells of five or six men. Ressam went to another camp near the town of Deronta for further explosives training. But "we were all to meet in Canada and we were all to carry out bank robberies and then get the money to carry out an operation in America," he testified.

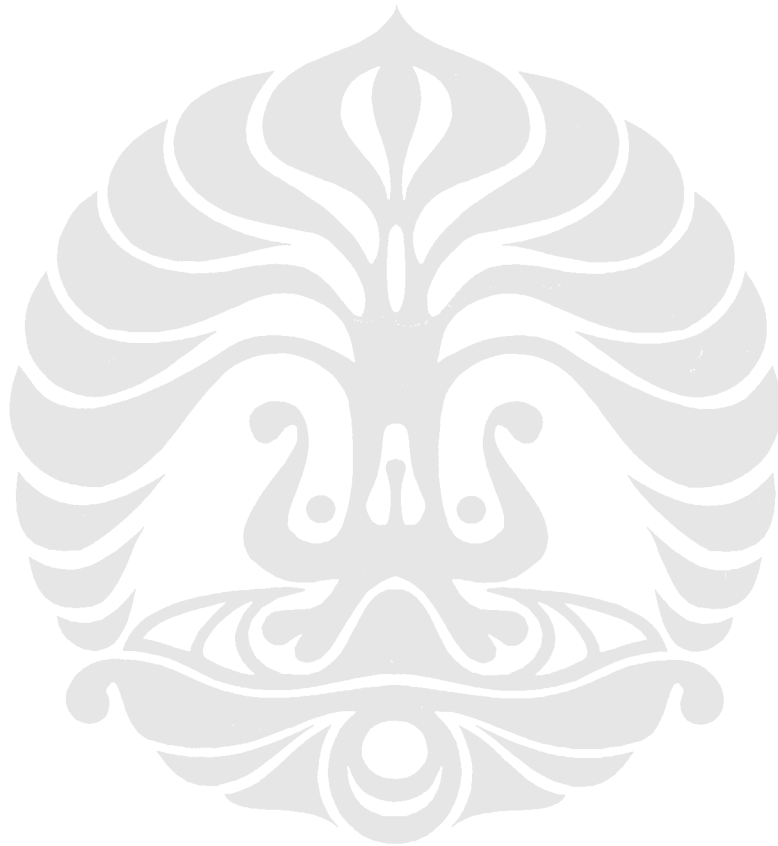
(p. 10) By late 1998, Ressam's cell was taking shape in Montreal. There it was linked to a support network supplying false documents that was run by Fateh Kamel, a slight, intense Algerian-Canadian businessman with blow-dried hair, immaculately trimmed beard and features reminiscent of Tom Cruise. He was convicted of terrorist activities in France this year after evidence surfaced linking him to cells in Canada and France, Bosnia, Italy and Istanbul, designed to help terrorists escape if they were not carrying out suicide missions.

(p. 11) Ressam and Kamel and perhaps a half- dozen other cells failed in their plans to mark Y2K with apocalyptic fireworks. Since Ressam's arrest at the border, thanks to a vigilant Customs inspector, American and European law-enforcement agents have busted up several of the Algerian cells linked to the Afghan camps. In early 1999, moreover, one branch of the Pakistani security forces, the Federal Investigation Agency, cracked down on Abu Zubaida and forced him into hiding. "No one knows where he is," says an Arab source who has known him since the 1980s. "They say he changes his name every month."

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(p. 12) Yet other cells kept operating. They may have been given seed money by the Saudi billionaire bin Laden, but they are trained to shift for themselves. They use the techniques of credit-card fraud and petty theft they learned in the camps, or they get paying jobs. "These people can fight without support," bin Laden associate Khalid al-Fawwaz told NEWSWEEK in 1998.

(p. 13) Acting like awkward tourists, living like good neighbors, some waited for the moment when they could pull off the most ferocious attack on America in history. How many others there are, each cell unaware of the other, is impossible to say. But the honey merchant Abu Zubaida and his boss, bin Laden, having built the hives, no longer have to give the orders. The work can go on without them.



The Roots of Rage – Islam & the West

Bin Laden's fanatics are the offspring of failed societies. U.S. policy must aim not only to defeat them but to help the Arab world.

By FAREED ZAKARIA | NEWSWEEK
From the magazine issue dated Oct 15, 2001

(p. 1) To the question "Why do the terrorists hate us?" Americans could be pardoned for answering, "Why should we care?" The immediate reaction to the murder of 5,000 innocents is anger, not analysis. Yet anger will not be enough to get us through what is sure to be a long struggle. For that we will need answers. The ones we have heard so far have been comforting but familiar. We stand for freedom and they hate it. We are rich and they envy us. We are strong and they resent this. All of which is true. But there are billions of poor and weak and oppressed people around the world. They don't turn planes into bombs. They don't blow themselves up to kill thousands of civilians. If envy were the cause of terrorism, Beverly Hills, Fifth Avenue and Mayfair would have become morgues long ago. There is something stronger at work here than deprivation and jealousy. Something that can move men to kill but also to die.

(p. 2) Osama bin Laden has an answer--religion. For him and his followers, this is a holy war between Islam and the Western world. Most Muslims disagree. Every Islamic country in the world has condemned the attacks of Sept. 11. To many, bin Laden belongs to a long line of extremists who have invoked religion to justify mass murder and spur men to suicide. The words "thug," "zealot" and "assassin" all come from ancient terror cults--Hindu, Jewish and Muslim, respectively--that believed they were doing the work of God. The terrorist's mind is its own place, and like Milton's Satan, can make a hell of heaven, a heaven of hell. Whether it is the Unabomber, Aum Shinrikyo or Baruch Goldstein (who killed scores of unarmed Muslims in Hebron), terrorists are almost always misfits who place their own twisted morality above mankind's.

(p. 3) But bin Laden and his followers are not an isolated cult like Aum Shinrikyo or the Branch Davidians or demented loners like Timothy McVeigh and the Unabomber. They come out of a culture that reinforces their hostility, distrust and hatred of the West--and of America in particular. This culture does not condone terrorism but fuels the fanaticism that is at its heart. To say that Al Qaeda is a fringe group may be reassuring, but it is false. Read the Arab press in the aftermath of the attacks and you will detect a not-so-hidden admiration for bin Laden. Or consider this from the Pakistani newspaper *The Nation*:

"September 11 was not mindless terrorism for terrorism's sake. It was reaction and revenge, even retribution." Why else is America's response to the terror attacks so deeply constrained by fears of an "Islamic backlash" on the streets? Pakistan will dare not allow Washington the use of its bases. Saudi Arabia trembles at the thought of having to help us publicly. Egypt pleads that our strikes be as limited as possible. The problem is not that Osama bin Laden believes that this is a

religious war against America. It's that millions of people across the Islamic world seem to agree.

(p. 4) This awkward reality has led some in the West to dust off old essays and older prejudices redicting a "clash of civilizations" between the West and Islam. The historian Paul Johnson has argued that Islam is intrinsically an intolerant and violent religion. Other scholars have disagreed, pointing out that Islam condemns the slaughter of innocents and prohibits suicide. Nothing will be solved by searching for "true Islam" or quoting the Quran. The Quran is a vast, vague book, filled with poetry and contradictions (much like the Bible).

You can find in it condemnations of war and incitements to struggle, beautiful expressions of tolerance and stern strictures against unbelievers. Quotations from it usually tell us more about the person who selected the passages than about Islam. Every religion is compatible with the best and the worst of humankind. Through its long history, Christianity has supported inquisitions and anti-Semitism, but also human rights and social welfare.

(p. 5) Searching the history books is also of limited value. From the Crusades of the 11th century to the Turkish expansion of the 15th century to the colonial era in the early 20th century, Islam and the West have often battled militarily. This tension has existed for hundreds of years, during which there have been many periods of peace and even harmony. Until the 1950s, for example, Jews and Christians lived peaceably under Muslim rule. In fact, Bernard Lewis, the pre-eminent historian of Islam, has argued that for much of history religious minorities did better under Muslim rulers than they did under Christian ones. All that has changed in the past few decades. So surely the relevant question we must ask is, Why are we in a particularly difficult phase right now? What has gone wrong in the world of Islam that explains not the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 or the siege of Vienna of 1683 but Sept. 11, 2001?

(p. 6) Let us first peer inside that vast Islamic world. Many of the largest Muslim countries in the world show little of this anti-American rage. The biggest, Indonesia, had, until the recent Asian economic crisis, been diligently following Washington's advice on economics, with impressive results. The second and third most populous Muslim countries, Pakistan and Bangladesh, have mixed Islam and modernity with some success. While both countries are impoverished, both have voted a woman into power as prime minister, before most Western countries have done so. Next is Turkey, the sixth largest Muslim country in the world, a flawed but functioning secular democracy and a close ally of the West (being a member of NATO).

(p. 7) Only when you get to the Middle East do you see in lurid colors all the dysfunctions that people conjure up when they think of Islam today. In Iran, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, the occupied territories and the Persian Gulf, the resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism is virulent, and a raw anti-Americanism seems to be everywhere. This is the land of suicide bombers, flag-burners and fiery mullahs. As we strike Afghanistan it is worth remembering that not a single

Afghan has been tied to a terrorist attack against the United States. Afghanistan is the campground from which an Arab army is battling America.

(p. 8) But even the Arab rage at America is relatively recent. In the 1950s and 1960s it seemed unimaginable that the United States and the Arab world would end up locked in a cultural clash. Egypt's most powerful journalist, Mohamed Heikal, described the mood at the time: "The whole picture of the United States... was a glamorous one. Britain and France were fading, hated empires. The Soviet Union was 5,000 miles away and the ideology of communism was anathema to the Muslim religion. But America had emerged from World War II richer, more powerful and more appealing than ever." I first traveled to the Middle East in the early 1970s, and even then the image of America was of a glistening, approachable modernity: fast cars, Hilton hotels and Coca-Cola. Something happened in these lands. To understand the roots of anti-American rage in the Middle East, we need to plumb not the past 300 years of history but the past 30.

Chapter I: The Rulers

(p. 9) It is difficult to conjure up the excitement in the Arab world in the late 1950s as Gamal Abdel Nasser consolidated power in Egypt. For decades Arabs had been ruled by colonial governors and decadent kings. Now they were achieving their dreams of independence, and Nasser was their new savior, a modern man for the postwar era. He was born under British rule, in Alexandria, a cosmopolitan city that was more Mediterranean than Arab. His formative years were spent in the Army, the most Westernized segment of the society. With his tailored suits and fashionable dark glasses, he cut an energetic figure on the world stage. "The Lion of Egypt," he spoke for all the Arab world.

(p. 10) Nasser believed that Arab politics needed to be fired by modern ideas like self-determination, socialism and Arab unity. And before oil money turned the gulf states into golden geese, Egypt was the undisputed leader of the Middle East. So Nasser's vision became the region's. Every regime, from the Baathists in Syria and Iraq to the conservative monarchies of the gulf, spoke in similar terms and tones. It wasn't that they were just aping Nasser. The Middle East desperately wanted to become modern.

(p. 11) It failed. For all their energy these regimes chose bad ideas and implemented them in worse ways. Socialism produced bureaucracy and stagnation. Rather than adjusting to the failures of central planning, the economies never really moved on. The republics calcified into dictatorships. Third World "nonalignment" became pro-Soviet propaganda. Arab unity cracked and crumbled as countries discovered their own national interests and opportunities. Worst of all, Israel humiliated the Arabs in the wars of 1967 and 1973. When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, he destroyed the last remnants of the Arab idea.

(p. 12) Look at Egypt today. The promise of Nasserism has turned into a quiet nightmare. The government is efficient in only one area: squashing dissent and strangling civil society. In the past 30 years Egypt's economy has sputtered along

while its population has doubled. Unemployment is at 25 percent, and 90 percent of those searching for jobs hold college diplomas. Once the heart of Arab intellectual life, the country produces just 375 books every year (compared with Israel's 4,000). For all the angry protests to foreigners, Egyptians know all this.

(p. 13) Shockingly, Egypt has fared better than its Arab neighbors. Syria has become one of the world's most oppressive police states, a country where 25,000 people can be rounded up and killed by the regime with no consequences. (This in a land whose capital, Damascus, is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world.) In 30 years Iraq has gone from being among the most modern and secular of Arab countries--with women working, artists thriving, journalists writing--into a squalid playpen for Saddam Hussein's megalomania. Lebanon, a diverse, cosmopolitan society with a capital, Beirut, that was once called the Paris of the East, has become a hellhole of war and terror. In an almost unthinkable reversal of a global pattern, almost every Arab country today is less free than it was 30 years ago. There are few countries in the world of which one can say that.

(p. 14) We think of Africa's dictators as rapacious, but those in the Middle East can be just as greedy. And when contrasted with the success of Israel, Arab failures are even more humiliating. For all its flaws, out of the same desert Israel has created a functioning democracy, a modern society with an increasingly high-technology economy and thriving artistic and cultural life. Israel now has a per capita GDP that equals that of many Western countries.

(p. 15) If poverty produced failure in most of Arabia, wealth produced failure in the rest of it. The rise of oil power in the 1970s gave a second wind to Arab hopes. Where Nasserism failed, petroleum would succeed. But it didn't. All that the rise of oil prices has done over three decades is to produce a new class of rich, superficially Western gulf Arabs, who travel the globe in luxury and are despised by the rest of the Arab world. Look at any cartoons of gulf sheiks in Egyptian, Jordanian or Syrian newspapers. They are portrayed in the most insulting, almost racist manner: as corpulent, corrupt and weak. Most Americans think that Arabs should be grateful for our role in the gulf war, for we saved Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Most Arabs think that we saved the Kuwaiti and Saudi royal families. Big difference.

(p. 16) The money that the gulf sheiks have frittered away is on a scale that is almost impossible to believe. Just one example: a favored prince of Saudi Arabia, at the age of 25, built a palace in Riyadh for \$300 million and, as an additional bounty, was given a \$1 billion commission on the kingdom's telephone contract with AT&T. Far from producing political progress, wealth has actually had some negative effects. It has enriched and empowered the gulf governments so that, like their Arab brethren, they, too, have become more repressive over time. The Bedouin societies they once ruled have become gilded cages, filled with frustrated, bitter and discontented young men--some of whom now live in Afghanistan and work with Osama bin Laden. (Bin Laden and some of his aides come from privileged backgrounds in Saudi Arabia.)

(p. 17) By the late 1980s, while the rest of the world was watching old regimes from Moscow to Prague to Seoul to Johannesburg crack, the Arabs were stuck with their aging dictators and corrupt kings. Regimes that might have seemed promising in the 1960s were now exposed as tired, corrupt kleptocracies, deeply unpopular and thoroughly illegitimate. One has to add that many of them are close American allies.

Chapter II: Failed Ideas

(p. 18) About a decade ago, in a casual conversation with an elderly Arab intellectual, I expressed my frustration that governments in the Middle East had been unable to liberalize their economies and societies in the way that the East Asians had done. "Look at Singapore, Hong Kong and Seoul," I said, pointing to their extraordinary economic achievements. The man, a gentle, charming scholar, straightened up and replied sharply, "Look at them. They have simply aped the West. Their cities are cheap copies of Houston and Dallas. That may be all right for fishing villages. But we are heirs to one of the great civilizations of the world. We cannot become slums of the West."

(p. 19) This disillusionment with the West is at the heart of the Arab problem. It makes economic advance impossible and political progress fraught with difficulty. Modernization is now taken to mean, inevitably, uncontrollably, Westernization and, even worse, Americanization. This fear has paralyzed Arab civilization. In some ways the Arab world seems less ready to confront the age of globalization than even Africa, despite the devastation that continent has suffered from AIDS and economic and political dysfunction. At least the Africans want to adapt to the new global economy. The Arab world has not yet taken that first step. The question is how a region that once yearned for modernity could reject it so dramatically. In the Middle Ages the Arabs studied Aristotle (when he was long forgotten in the West) and invented algebra. In the 19th century, when the West set ashore in Arab lands, in the form of Napoleon's conquest of Egypt, the locals were fascinated by this powerful civilization. In fact, as the historian Albert Hourani has documented, the 19th century saw European-inspired liberal political and social thought flourish in the Middle East.

(p. 20) The colonial era of the late 19th and early 20th centuries raised hopes of British friendship that were to be disappointed, but still Arab elites remained fascinated with the West. Future kings and generals attended Victoria College in Alexandria, learning the speech and manners of British gentlemen. Many then went on to Oxford, Cambridge and Sandhurst--a tradition that is still maintained by Jordan's royal family, though now they go to Hotchkiss or Lawrenceville. After World War I, a new liberal age flickered briefly in the Arab world, as ideas about opening up politics and society gained currency in places like Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq and Syria. But since they were part of a world of kings and aristocrats, these ideas died with those old regimes. The new ones, however, turned out to be just as Western.

(p. 21) Nasser thought his ideas for Egypt and the Arab world were modern. They were also Western. His "national charter" of 1962 reads as if it were written by left-wing intellectuals in Paris or London. (Like many Third World leaders of the time, Nasser was a devoted reader of France's *Le Monde* and Britain's *New Statesman*.) Even his most passionately held project, Pan-Arabism, was European. It was a version of the nationalism that had united Italy and Germany in the 1870s--that those who spoke one language should be one nation. America thinks of modernity as all good--and it has been almost all good for America. But for the Arab world, modernity has been one failure after another. Each path followed--socialism, secularism, nationalism--has turned into a dead end. While other countries adjusted to their failures, Arab regimes got stuck in their ways. And those that reformed economically could not bring themselves to ease up politically. The Shah of Iran, the Middle Eastern ruler who tried to move his country into the modern era fastest, reaped the most violent reaction in the Iranian revolution of 1979. But even the shah's modernization--compared, for example, with the East Asian approach of hard work, investment and thrift--was an attempt to buy modernization with oil wealth.

(p. 22) It turns out that modernization takes more than strongmen and oil money. Importing foreign stuff--Cadillacs, Gulfstreams and McDonald's--is easy. Importing the inner stuffings of modern society--a free market, political parties, accountability and the rule of law--is difficult and dangerous. The gulf states, for example, have gotten modernization lite, with the goods and even the workers imported from abroad. Nothing was homegrown; nothing is even now. As for politics, the gulf governments offered their people a bargain: we will bribe you with wealth, but in return let us stay in power. It was the inverse slogan of the American revolution--no taxation, but no representation either.

(p. 23) The new age of globalization has hit the Arab world in a very strange way. Its societies are open enough to be disrupted by modernity, but not so open that they can ride the wave. They see the television shows, the fast foods and the fizzy drinks. But they don't see genuine liberalization in the society, with increased opportunities and greater openness. Globalization in the Arab world is the critic's caricature of globalization--a slew of Western products and billboards with little else. For some in their societies it means more things to buy. For the regimes it is an unsettling, dangerous phenomenon. As a result, the people they rule can look at globalization but for the most part not touch it.

(p. 24) America stands at the center of this world of globalization. It seems unstoppable. If you close the borders, America comes in through the mail. If you censor the mail, it appears in the fast food and faded jeans. If you ban the products, it seeps in through satellite television. Americans are so comfortable with global capitalism and consumer culture that we cannot fathom just how revolutionary these forces are.

(p. 25) Disoriented young men, with one foot in the old world and another in the new, now look for a purer, simpler alternative. Fundamentalism searches for such people everywhere; it, too, has been globalized. One can now find men in

Indonesia who regard the Palestinian cause as their own. (Twenty years ago an Indonesian Muslim would barely have known where Palestine was.) Often they learned about this path away from the West while they were in the West. As did Mohamed Atta, the Hamburg-educated engineer who drove the first plane into the World Trade Center.

(p. 26) The Arab world has a problem with its Attas in more than one sense. Globalization has caught it at a bad demographic moment. Arab societies are going through a massive youth bulge, with more than half of most countries' populations under the age of 25. Young men, often better educated than their parents, leave their traditional villages to find work. They arrive in noisy, crowded cities like Cairo, Beirut and Damascus or go to work in the oil states. (Almost 10 percent of Egypt's working population worked in the gulf at one point.) In their new world they see great disparities of wealth and the disorienting effects of modernity; most unsettlingly, they see women, unveiled and in public places, taking buses, eating in cafes and working alongside them.

(p. 27) A huge influx of restless young men in any country is bad news. When accompanied by even small economic and social change, it usually produces a new politics of protest. In the past, societies in these circumstances have fallen prey to a search for revolutionary solutions. (France went through a youth bulge just before the French Revolution, as did Iran before its 1979 revolution.) In the case of the Arab world, this revolution has taken the form of an Islamic resurgence.

Chapter III: Enter Religion

(p. 28) Nasser was a reasonably devout Muslim, but he had no interest in mixing religion with politics. It struck him as moving backward. This became apparent to the small Islamic parties that supported Nasser's rise to power. The most important one, the Muslim Brotherhood, began opposing him vigorously, often violently.

Nasser cracked down on it in 1954, imprisoning more than a thousand of its leaders and executing six. One of those jailed, Sayyid Qutub, a frail man with a fiery pen, wrote a book in prison called "Signposts on the Road," which in some ways marks the beginnings of modern political Islam or what is often called "Islamic fundamentalism."

(p. 29) In his book, Qutub condemned Nasser as an impious Muslim and his regime as un-Islamic. Indeed, he went on, almost every modern Arab regime was similarly flawed. Qutub envisioned a better, more virtuous polity that was based on strict Islamic principles, a core goal of orthodox Muslims since the 1880s. As the regimes of the Middle East grew more distant and oppressive and hollow in the decades following Nasser, fundamentalism's appeal grew. It flourished because the Muslim Brotherhood and organizations like it at least tried to give people a sense of meaning and purpose in a changing world, something no leader in the Middle East tried to do.

(p. 30) In his seminal work, "The Arab Predicament," Fouad Ajami explains, "The fundamentalist call has resonance because it invited men to participate... [in] contrast to a political culture that reduces citizens to spectators and asks them to leave things to their rulers. At a time when the future is uncertain, it connects them to a tradition that reduces bewilderment." Fundamentalism gave Arabs who were dissatisfied with their lot a powerful language of opposition.

(p. 31) On that score, Islam had little competition. The Arab world is a political desert with no real political parties, no free press, few pathways for dissent. As a result, the mosque turned into the place to discuss politics. And fundamentalist organizations have done more than talk. From the Muslim Brotherhood to Hamas to Hizbullah, they actively provide social services, medical assistance, counseling and temporary housing. For those who treasure civil society, it is disturbing to see that in the Middle East these illiberal groups are civil society.

(p. 32) I asked Sheri Berman, a scholar at Princeton who studies the rise of fascist parties in Europe, whether she saw any parallels. "Fascists were often very effective at providing social services," she pointed out. "When the state or political parties fail to provide a sense of legitimacy or purpose or basic services, other organizations have often been able to step into the void. In Islamic countries there is a ready-made source of legitimacy in the religion. So it's not surprising that this is the foundation on which these groups have flourished. The particular form--Islamic fundamentalism--is specific to this region, but the basic dynamic is similar to the rise of Nazism, fascism and even populism in the United States."

(p. 33) Islamic fundamentalism got a tremendous boost in 1979 when Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini toppled the Shah of Iran. The Iranian revolution demonstrated that a powerful ruler could be taken on by groups within society. It also revealed how in a broken society even seemingly benign forces of progress--education and technology--can add to the turmoil. Until the 1970s most Muslims in the Middle East were illiterate and lived in villages and towns. They practiced a kind of street-Islam that had adapted itself to the local culture. Pluralistic and tolerant, these people often worshiped saints, went to shrines, sang religious hymns and cherished religious art, all technically disallowed in Islam. (This was particularly true in Iran.) By the 1970s, however, people had begun moving out of the villages and their religious experience was not rooted in a specific place. At the same time they were learning to read and they discovered that a new Islam was being preached by the fundamentalists, an abstract faith not rooted in historical experience but literal, puritanical and by the book. It was Islam of the High Church as opposed to Islam of the village fair.

(p. 34) In Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini used a powerful technology--the audiocassette. His sermons were distributed throughout the country and became the vehicle of opposition to the shah's repressive regime. But Khomeini was not alone in using the language of Islam as a political tool. Intellectuals, disillusioned by the half-baked or overrapid modernization that was throwing their world into turmoil, were writing books against "Westoxification" and calling the modern Iranian man--half Western, half Eastern--rootless. Fashionable intellectuals, often

writing from the comfort of London or Paris, would critique American secularism and consumerism and endorse an Islamic alternative. As theories like these spread across the Arab world, they appealed not to the poorest of the poor, for whom Westernization was magical (it meant food and medicine). They appealed to the half-educated hordes entering the cities of the Middle East or seeking education and jobs in the West.

(p. 35) The fact that Islam is a highly egalitarian religion for the most part has also proved an empowering call for people who felt powerless. At the same time it means that no Muslim really has the authority to question whether someone who claims to be a proper Muslim is one. The fundamentalists, from Sayyid Qutub on, have jumped into that the void. They ask whether people are "good Muslims." It is a question that has terrified the Muslim world. And here we come to the failure not simply of governments but intellectual and social elites. Moderate Muslims are loath to criticize or debunk the fanaticism of the fundamentalists. Like the moderates in Northern Ireland, they are scared of what would happen to them if they speak their mind.

(p. 36) The biggest Devil's bargain has been made by the moderate monarchies of the Persian Gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia. The Saudi regime has played a dangerous game. It deflects attention from its shoddy record at home by funding religious schools (madrasas) and centers that spread a rigid, puritanical brand of Islam--Wahhabism. In the past 30 years Saudi-funded schools have churned out tens of thousands of half-educated, fanatical Muslims who view the modern world and non-Muslims with great suspicion. America in this world view is almost always evil.

(p. 37) This exported fundamentalism has in turn infected not just other Arab societies but countries outside the Arab world, like Pakistan. During the 11-year reign of Gen. Zia ul-Haq, the dictator decided that as he squashed political dissent he needed allies. He found them in the fundamentalists. With the aid of Saudi financiers and functionaries, he set up scores of madrasas throughout the country. They bought him temporary legitimacy but have eroded the social fabric of Pakistan.

(p. 38) If there is one great cause of the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, it is the total failure of political institutions in the Arab world. Muslim elites have averted their eyes from this reality. Conferences at Islamic centers would still rather discuss "Islam and the Environment" than examine the dysfunctions of the current regimes. But as the moderate majority looks the other way, Islam is being taken over by a small poisonous element, people who advocate cruel attitudes toward women, education, the economy and modern life in general. I have seen this happen in India, where I grew up. The rich, colorful, pluralistic and easygoing Islam of my youth has turned into a dour, puritanical faith, policed by petty theocrats and religious commissars. The next section deals with what the United States can do to help the Islamic world. But if Muslims do not take it upon themselves to stop their religion from falling prey to medievalists, nothing any outsider can do will save them.

Chapter IV: WHAT TO DO

(p. 39) If almost any Arab were to have read this essay so far, he would have objected vigorously by now. "It is all very well to talk about the failures of the Arab world," he would say, "but what about the failures of the West? You speak of long-term decline, but our problems are with specific, cruel American policies." For most Arabs, relations with the United States have been filled with disappointment.

(p. 40) While the Arab world has long felt betrayed by Europe's colonial powers, its disillusionment with America begins most importantly with the creation of Israel in 1948. As the Arabs see it, at a time when colonies were winning independence from the West, here was a state largely composed of foreign people being imposed on a region with Western backing. The anger deepened in the wake of America's support for Israel during the wars of 1967 and 1973, and ever since in its relations with the Palestinians. The daily exposure to Israel's iron-fisted rule over the occupied territories has turned this into the great cause of the Arab--and indeed the broader Islamic--world. Elsewhere, they look at American policy in the region as cynically geared to America's oil interests, supporting thugs and tyrants without any hesitation. Finally, the bombing and isolation of Iraq have become fodder for daily attacks on the United States. While many in the Arab world do not like Saddam Hussein, they believe that the United States has chosen a particularly inhuman method of fighting him--a method that is starving an entire nation.

(p. 41) There is substance to some of these charges, and certainly from the point of view of an Arab, American actions are never going to seem entirely fair. Like any country, America has its interests. In my view, America's greatest sins toward the Arab world are sins of omission. We have neglected to press any regime there to open up its society. This neglect turned deadly in the case of Afghanistan. Walking away from that fractured country after 1989 resulted in the rise of bin Laden and the Taliban. This is not the gravest error a great power can make, but it is a common American one. As F. Scott Fitzgerald explained of his characters in "The Great Gatsby," "They were careless people, Tom and Daisy--they smashed things up and creatures and then retreated back into their money, or their vast carelessness... and let other people clean up the mess." America has not been venal in the Arab world. But it has been careless.

(p. 42) Yet carelessness is not enough to explain Arab rage. After all, if concern for the Palestinians is at the heart of the problem, why have their Arab brethren done nothing for them? (They cannot resettle in any Arab nation but Jordan, and the aid they receive from the gulf states is minuscule.) Israel treats its 1 million Arabs as second-class citizens, a disgrace on its democracy. And yet the tragedy of the Arab world is that Israel accords them more political rights and dignities than most Arab nations give to their own people. Why is the focus of Arab anger on Israel and not those regimes?

(p. 43) The disproportionate feelings of grievance directed at America have to be placed in the overall context of the sense of humiliation, decline and despair that sweeps the Arab world. After all, the Chinese vigorously disagree with most of America's foreign policy and have fought wars with U.S. proxies. African states feel the same sense of disappointment and unfairness. But they do not work it into a rage against America. Arabs, however, feel that they are under siege from the modern world and that the United States symbolizes this world. Thus every action America takes gets magnified a thousandfold. And even when we do not act, the rumors of our gigantic powers and nefarious deeds still spread. Most Americans would not believe how common the rumor is throughout the Arab world that either the CIA or Israel's Mossad blew up the World Trade Center to justify attacks on Arabs and Muslims. This is the culture from which the suicide bombers have come.

(p. 44) America must now devise a strategy to deal with this form of religious terrorism. As is now widely understood, this will be a long war, with many fronts and battles small and large. Our strategy must be divided along three lines: military, political and cultural. On the military front--by which I mean war, covert operations and other forms of coercion--the goal is simple: the total destruction of Al Qaeda. Even if we never understand all the causes of apocalyptic terror, we must do battle against it. Every person who plans and helps in a terrorist operation must understand that he will be tracked and punished. Their operations will be disrupted, their finances drained, their hideouts destroyed. There will be associated costs to pursuing such a strategy, but they will all fade if we succeed. Nothing else matters on the military front.

(p. 45) The political strategy is more complex and more ambitious. At the broadest level, we now have a chance to reorder the international system around this pressing new danger. The degree of cooperation from around the world has been unprecedented. We should not look on this trend suspiciously. Most governments feel threatened by the rise of subnational forces like Al Qaeda. Even some that have clearly supported terrorism in the past, like Iran, seem interested in re-entering the world community and reforming their ways.

(p. 46) We can define a strategy for the post-cold-war era that addresses America's principal national-security need and yet is sustained by a broad international consensus. To do this we will have to give up some cold-war reflexes, such as an allergy to multilateralism, and stop insisting that China is about to rival us militarily or that Russia is likely to re-emerge as a new military threat. (For 10 years now, our defense forces have been aligned for everything but the real danger we face. This will inevitably change.)

(p. 47) The purpose of an international coalition is practical and strategic. Given the nature of this war, we will need the constant cooperation of other governments--to make arrests, shut down safe houses, close bank accounts and share intelligence. Alliance politics has become a matter of high national security. But there is a broader imperative. The United States dominates the world in a way that inevitably arouses envy or anger or opposition. That comes with the power,

but we still need to get things done. If we can mask our power in--sorry, work with--institutions like the United Nations Security Council, U.S. might will be easier for much of the world to bear. Bush's father understood this, which is why he ensured that the United Nations sanctioned the gulf war. The point here is to succeed, and international legitimacy can help us do that.

(p. 48) Now we get to Israel. It is obviously one of the central and most charged problems in the region. But it is a problem to which we cannot offer the Arab world support for its solution--the extinction of the state. We cannot in any way weaken our commitment to the existence and health of Israel. Similarly, we cannot abandon our policy of containing Saddam Hussein. He is building weapons of mass destruction.

(p. 49) However, we should not pursue mistaken policies simply out of spite. Our policy toward Saddam is broken. We have no inspectors in Iraq, the sanctions are--for whatever reason--starving Iraqis and he continues to build chemical and biological weapons. There is a way to reorient our policy to focus our pressure on Saddam and not his people, contain him militarily but not harm common Iraqis economically. Colin Powell has been trying to do this; he should be given leeway to try again. In time we will have to address the broader question of what to do about Saddam, a question that, unfortunately, does not have an easy answer. (Occupying Iraq, even if we could do it, does not seem a good idea in this climate.)

(p. 50) On Israel we should make a clear distinction between its right to exist and its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. On the first we should be as unyielding as ever; on the second we should continue trying to construct a final deal along the lines that Bill Clinton and Ehud Barak outlined. I suggest that we do this less because it will lower the temperature in the Arab world--who knows if it will?--than because it's the right thing to do. Israel cannot remain a democracy and continue to occupy and militarily rule 3 million people against their wishes. It's bad for Israel, bad for the Palestinians and bad for the United States.

(p. 51) But policy changes, large or small, are not at the heart of the struggle we face. The third, vital component to this battle is a cultural strategy. The United States must help Islam enter the modern world. It sounds like an impossible challenge, and it certainly is not one we would have chosen. But America--indeed the whole world--faces a dire security threat that will not be resolved unless we can stop the political, economic and cultural collapse that lies at the roots of Arab rage. During the cold war the West employed myriad ideological strategies to discredit the appeal of communism, make democracy seem attractive and promote open societies. We will have to do something on that scale to win this cultural struggle.

(p. 52) First, we have to help moderate Arab states, but on the condition that they embrace moderation. For too long regimes like Saudi Arabia's have engaged in a deadly dance with religious extremism. Even Egypt, which has always denounced fundamentalism, allows its controlled media to rant crazily about America and

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Israel. (That way they don't rant about the dictatorship they live under.) But more broadly, we must persuade Arab moderates to make the case to their people that Islam is compatible with modern society, that it does allow women to work, that it encourages education and that it has welcomed people of other faiths and creeds. Some of this they will do--Sept. 11 has been a wake-up call for many. The Saudi regime denounced and broke its ties to the Taliban (a regime that it used to glorify as representing pure Islam). The Egyptian press is now making the case for military action. The United States and the West should do their own work as well. We can fund moderate Muslim groups and scholars and broadcast fresh thinking across the Arab world, all aimed at breaking the power of the fundamentalists.

(p. 53) Obviously we will have to help construct a new political order in Afghanistan after we have deposed the Taliban regime. But beyond that we have to press the nations of the Arab world--and others, like Pakistan, where the virus of fundamentalism has spread--to reform, open up and gain legitimacy. We need to do business with these regimes; yet, just as we did with South Korea and Taiwan during the cold war, we can ally with these dictatorships and still push them toward reform. For those who argue that we should not engage in nation-building, I would say foreign policy is not theology. I have myself been skeptical of nation-building in places where our interests were unclear and it seemed unlikely that we would stay the course. In this case, stable political development is the key to reducing our single greatest security threat. We have no option but to get back into the nation-building business.

(p. 54) It sounds like a daunting challenge, but there are many good signs. Al Qaeda is not more powerful than the combined force of many determined governments. The world is indeed uniting around American leadership, and perhaps we will see the emergence, for a while, of a new global community and consensus, which could bring progress in many other areas of international life. Perhaps most important, Islamic fundamentalism still does not speak to the majority of the Muslim people. In Pakistan, fundamentalist parties have yet to get more than 10 percent of the vote. In Iran, having experienced the brutal puritanism of the mullahs, people are yearning for normalcy. In Egypt, for all the repression, the fundamentalists are a potent force but so far not dominant. If the West can help Islam enter modernity in dignity and peace, it will have done more than achieved security. It will have changed the world.

How to Save the Arab World

Washington's hands-off approach must go. The first step to undermining extremism is to prod regimes into economic reform.

By FAREED ZAKARIA | NEWSWEEK
From the magazine issue dated Dec 24, 2001

(p. 1) It is always the same splendid setting--and the same sad story. A senior American diplomat enters one of the grand presidential palaces in Heliopolis, the neighborhood of Cairo from which President Hosni Mubarak rules over Egypt. Walking through halls of marble and gilt, passing layers of security guards, he arrives at a formal drawing room where he is received with great courtesy by the Egyptian president. The two men talk amiably about U.S.-Egyptian relations, regional matters and the state of the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians. Then the American gently raises the issue of human rights and suggests that Egypt's government might ease up on political dissent, allow more press freedoms and stop jailing intellectuals. Mubarak tenses up and snaps, "If I were to do what you ask, the fundamentalists will take over Egypt. Is that what you want?" The diplomat demurs and the conversation moves back to the latest twist in the peace process.

(p. 2) Over the last decade Americans and Arabs have had many such exchanges. When President Bill Clinton urged Yasir Arafat to sign on to the Camp David peace plan in July 2001, Arafat is reported to have responded with words to the effect, "If I do what you want, Hamas will be in power tomorrow." The Saudi monarchy's most articulate spokesman, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, often reminds American officials that if they press his government too hard, the likely alternative to the regime is not Jeffersonian democracy but Islamic theocracy.

(p. 3) This fear--the Fear of the Alternative (FOTA)--has paralyzed American foreign policy in the Middle East. Compared with almost every other part of the world, where over the last three decades the United States has pushed for economic and political reforms--sometimes more slowly than democrats would like--in this region it has always veered away from any such confrontations. The Middle East is the great exception in American foreign policy.

(p. 4) The results are plain. The Middle East today stands in stark contrast to the rest of the world, where freedom and democracy have been gaining ground over the last two decades. In its latest annual survey, released last week, New York's Freedom House finds that 75 percent of the world's countries are currently "free" or "partly free." Only 28 percent of Middle Eastern countries could be so described, a percentage that has fallen during the last 20 years. By comparison, more than 60 percent of African countries today are free or partly free.

(p. 5) The initial reasons for this hands-off approach to the Middle East were oil, then Israel. The United States is terrified by the prospect of chaos in the petroleum paradise of Arabia. It has also assumed that dictators could guarantee a more

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secure peace with Israel than democrats. But now, above all, Washington simply worries about change--FOTA. The monarchs and dictators are quick to remind us always that for all their faults, they are better than the alternative.

(p. 6) The worst part of it is, they may be right. America's allies in the Middle East are autocratic, corrupt and heavy-handed. But they are still more liberal, tolerant and pluralistic than what would likely replace them. If elections had been held last month in Saudi Arabia with King Fahd and Osama bin Laden on the ballot, I would not bet too heavily on His Royal Highness's fortunes. Last year the emir of Kuwait, with American encouragement, proposed to give women the vote. But the democratically elected Parliament--packed with Islamic fundamentalists--roundly rejected the initiative. A similar dynamic is evident in the kingdoms of the gulf from Saudi Arabia to Bahrain. In Jordan and Morocco, on virtually every political issue, the monarchs are more liberal than the societies over which they reign. In the Palestinian Authority, Hamas has more popular support than Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization, especially with the young. And many of these Islamic fundamentalist parties are sham democrats.

(p. 7) They would happily come to power through an election but then set up their own dictatorship. It would be one man, one vote, one time. Consider the Arab reaction to the videotape of Osama bin Laden. Most of the region's governments quickly noted that the tape seemed genuine and proved bin Laden's guilt. Prince Bandar issued a statement that said, "The tape displays the cruel and inhumane face of a murderous criminal who has no respect for the sanctity of human life or the principles of his faith." Compare those reactions with that of a Saudi cleric like Sheik Mohammad Saleh, a dissident voice, who said, "I think this recording is forged." Or Abdul Latif Arabiat, head of Jordan's mainstream Islamist party, the Islamic Action Front, who explained, "Do the Americans really think the world is that stupid to think that they would believe that this tape is evidence?" In most societies dissidents force their country to take a hard look at its own failings. In the Middle East, the democrats are the first to seek refuge in fantasy, denial and delusion. The state-owned media do not need to promote crazed conspiracy theories about the Mossad's secret role in bombing the World Trade Center or the CIA's fabrication of the bin Laden videotape. The "free" television station, Al-Jazeera, does it voluntarily--and the public laps it up.

(p. 8) America confronts a strange problem. We are used to thinking of democracy as good and dictatorship as bad, but we confront a world turned upside down in the Middle East. Caught between autocratic states and illiberal societies, the temptation is to throw up one's hands in despair and walk away. Indeed, many thoughtful observers have done so, arguing that our task should simply be to crush Al Qaeda and groups like it. This might force Arabs to look at their own societies and ask some hard questions. But that is their concern.

(p. 9) Military victory is indeed essential. Radical political Islam is an "armed doctrine," in Edmund Burke's phrase. Like other armed doctrines before it--fascism, for example--it can be discredited only by first being defeated. When Adolf Hitler was on the rise and advancing in the 1930s, tens of millions of people

in Europe and around the world admired his strength and vision. (Young children from Latin America to Turkey were named Adolf in his honor.) Once Nazism was destroyed, they quickly abandoned his cause. (The children were given new names.) Bin Laden understands well the power of success. On the videotape, speaking of the surge of interest in his cause after September 11, he says matter-of-factly, "When people see a strong horse and a weak horse, by nature they will like the strong horse." America must ensure that men like bin Laden are always seen as weak horses, preferably dead ones.

(p. 10) Having destroyed bin Laden's aura of success, the United States now has a unique opportunity to press its victory and "drain the swamp" of Islamic extremism. This means taking the battle to its real source, which is not Afghanistan but Arabia. Washington cannot walk away from that region. Oil, strategic ties and history will ensure our ongoing involvement. We will continue to aid the Egyptian regime, we will continue to protect the Saudi monarchy, we will continue to broker negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. The question really is, shouldn't we ask for something in return? By not pushing these regimes, the United States would be making a conscious decision to let things stay as they are--to once again opt for "stability." But it is blindingly clear that the current situation is highly unstable. Even if viewed from a narrow strategic perspective, it is in America's immediate security interests to try to make the regimes of the Middle East less prone to breed fanaticism and terror. And the only way to do this is to make these regimes more legitimate in the eyes of their people.

(p. 11) At the start the United States must recognize its true goals. We do not seek democracy in the Middle East--at least not yet. We seek first what might be called the preconditions for democracy, or what I have called "constitutional liberalism"--the rule of law, individual rights, private property, independent courts, the separation of church and state. In the Western world these two ideas have fused together--hence "liberal democracy"--but they are analytically and historically distinct. Britain and the United States were both countries governed by law and in which human rights were honored well before they became full-fledged electoral democracies. We should not assume that what took hundreds of years in the West can happen overnight in the Middle East.

(p. 12) Clarifying our immediate goals actually makes them more easily attainable. The regimes in the Middle East will be delighted to learn that we will not try to force them to hold elections tomorrow. They will be less pleased to know that we will continually press them on a whole array of other issues. The starting point for talking to our allies should be that they observe the Hippocratic counsel--"do no harm." The Saudi monarchy must order a comprehensive overview of its funding (both private and public) of extremist Islam, which is now the kingdom's second largest export to the rest of the world. It must rein in its religious and educational leaders and force them to stop flirting with fanaticism. In Egypt, we must ask President Mubarak to insist that the state-owned press drop its anti-American and anti-Semitic rants, end the glorification of suicide bombers and begin opening itself up to other voices in the country. In Qatar we might ask

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the emir, who launched Al-Jazeera, to make sure that responsible, moderate Muslims appear as regularly on his network as extremist bin Laden sympathizers. None of this will produce democracy, but it will slow down the spread of illiberal voices and viewpoints.

(p. 13) These are all important steps, but they are temporary ones, attempts to pour water on a fiery culture. The more lasting path to reform will be economic. Over the last three decades there has been a remarkable pattern in the progress of political freedom around the world. Those countries that have made the transition from dictatorship to democracy with greatest success--Spain, Portugal, Chile, Taiwan, South Korea, Mexico--all traveled along a similar road.

(p. 14) The regimes first liberalized the economy, not out of any desire to expand freedom but rather because they wanted to get rich. But this expansion of economic liberty had steady spillover effects. Economic reform meant the beginnings of a genuine rule of law--capitalism needs contracts--openness to the world, access to information and, perhaps most important, the development of a business class.

(p. 15) Karl Marx was wrong about most things. But he was right when he argued that an independent class of business people is the key to liberal democracy. (Of course, he did not mean this as a compliment.) Business people have a stake in openness, in rules and in stability. They want their societies to modernize and move forward rather than stay trapped in factionalism and war. Instead of the romance of ideology, they seek the reality of material progress. In the Middle East today there are too many people consumed by political dreams and too few interested in practical plans. There is a dominant business class there, but it is one that owes its position to oil or connections to the ruling families. It is the wealth of feudalism, not capitalism, and its political effects remain feudal as well. A genuine entrepreneurial business class would be the single most important force for change in the Middle East, pulling along all others in its wake. (The Palestinians, tragically, have long been the region's best merchants and would probably respond fastest to new economic opportunities if they could put the intifada behind them.) Ultimately, this battle is one Middle Easterners will have to fight, which is why there needs to be some group within these societies that advocates and benefits from economic and political reform.

(p. 16) This is not as fantastic an idea as it might sound. There are already stirrings of genuine economic activity in parts of the Middle East. Jordan has become a member of the WTO, signed a free-trade pact with the United States, privatized key industries and even encouraged cross-border business ventures with Israel. Egypt has made some small progress on the road to reform. Among the oil-rich countries, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates are trying to wean themselves of their dependence on oil. Dubai, part of the U.A.E., has already gotten oil down to merely 8 percent of its GDP and publicly announces its intention to become the "Singapore of the Middle East." (It would do well to emulate Singapore's tolerance of its ethnic and religious minorities.) Even Saudi Arabia recognizes that its oil economy can provide only one job for every three of

its young men coming into the work force. In Algeria, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika desperately wants foreign investment to repair his tattered economy. We should welcome this interest. Economic necessity can be the mother of reform. But Washington ought to insist on genuine reform--new legal codes, new regulations, privatization--before giving any encouragement to the IMF or the private sector to venture into these countries. Better to have two countries that are genuine reformers than 20 fraudulent programs.

(p. 17) If we could choose one place to press hardest to reform, it should be Egypt. Jordan has a more progressive ruler; Saudi Arabia is more critical because of its oil. But Egypt is the intellectual soul of the Arab world. If it were to progress economically and politically, it would demonstrate more powerfully than any essay or speech that Islam is compatible with modernity, and that Arabs can thrive in today's world. In East Asia, Japan's economic success proved to be a powerful example that others in the region looked to and followed. The Middle East needs one such homegrown success story. (To its credit, the Clinton administration did try a high-level economic initiative toward Egypt along these lines, but the Egyptian regime was able to stymie it.)

(p. 18) When we sit down to talk with these regimes, inevitably we will return to FOTA, Fear of the Alternative. The regimes will remind us that they cannot do all that we ask because otherwise the fundamentalists will come to power. We should not believe them. The rulers of the Middle East are not democratic politicians with finely tuned senses of what their publics want. They are dictators. After all, if Mubarak were so close to his people, why would he need to arrest, torture and murder hundreds to stay in power? These men fear a public that they barely know.

(p. 19) The greatest potency Islamic fundamentalism holds is that it is an alternative-- a mystical, utopian alternative--to the wretched reality that most people live under in the Middle East. Accommodating these forces--as long as they are nonviolent--has the effect of taming them, bringing them into the system. No one is talking about moving to democracy overnight. In Egypt, for example, the Parliament is utterly powerless. Yet Muslim fundamentalists cannot openly stand for elections to it. This has made them only more extreme and heightened their stature as persecuted heroes. The few regimes that are beginning to allow some dissent within the system--Jordan and Morocco--are faring much better.

(p. 20) Wherever Muslim fundamentalists have been involved in day-to-day politics--Bangladesh, Pakistan, Turkey, Iran--their luster has worn off. People have realized that the streets still have to be cleaned, government finances have to be managed and education attended to. The mullahs can preach, but they cannot rule. For this reason, Iran might well hold out the greatest promise for liberal democracy and secular politics in the Middle East. Having lived under Islamic fundamentalist rule, Iranians are now inoculated against its appeal. It may take another decade or two, and risking that long--and bumpy--roller-coaster ride is dangerous for countries like Egypt and Saudi Arabia. But if these regimes were to open up some political space and force their fundamentalist foes to grapple with practical realities rather than spin dreams, they will find it cannot but dull the

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extremists' allure. Islamic fundamentalists must stop being seen as distant heroes and viewed instead as local politicians.

(p. 21) A consummate politician, Tip O'Neill, once said that all politics is local. So is the politics of rage. The frustrations of ordinary Arabs are not about the clash of civilizations or the rise of McDonald's or the imperial foreign policy of the United States. They are a response to living under wretched, repressive regimes with few economic opportunities and no political voice. And they blame America for supporting these regimes. For those who think that this problem is unique to the Arab world or that Arabs will never change, remember that 25 years ago the most virulent anti-American protests would have taken place in countries like Chile, Mexico and South Korea. The reasons were the same--people disliked the regimes that ruled them and they saw America as the benefactor of those regimes. Then these dictatorships liberalized, people's lives improved, political reform followed economic reform and anti-U.S. sentiment has quieted down to the usual protests against the Americanization of their cultures. With Osama bin Laden's decline, perhaps the Middle East will move on a similar path; violence, religious extremism and terrorism will be drained out of the political culture and, instead, its people can join the rest of the world in worrying about the threat from McDonald's and "Baywatch." That kind of anti-Americanism will be a sign of a healthy political culture.

With Christopher Dickey in Amman and Cairo

Meet the Bin Ladens

They Had It All: Money, Power--And Now the Most Wanted Man on Earth. A Family Affair.

By CHRISTOPHER DICKEY AND DANIEL MCGINN | NEWSWEEK
From the magazine issue dated Oct 15, 2001

(p. 1) Boston real-estate agent Ellen Signaigo Brockman was paging through the newspaper one day in the early 1990s when a story about a little-known terrorist named Osama bin Laden caught her eye. A few days later, she showed the article to a business acquaintance. "Isn't this name similar to yours?" she asked Mohammed Binladin. Yes, he told her. The man in the newspaper was his brother. Osama, he explained sadly, was the black sheep of their wealthy Saudi family. Many of the clan's 54 children, heirs to a vast construction fortune, traveled the world, studied abroad and developed a taste for American food, music and clothing. But Osama had chosen a much different path. He became a radical Islamic fundamentalist, hid in mountain caves, obsessed endlessly about destroying Western infidels. Many of the other brothers and sisters used their inheritances to buy businesses to fund lavish lives. Osama used his to buy businesses to fund suicide bombers. Osama "had gotten a little out of control," Mohammed lamented. "My brother never really found a place for himself."

(p. 2) Nearly a decade later, the sadness Osama bin Laden's siblings may have once felt for their wayward brother has hardened into anger. The family "feels shattered, feels abused, feels tortured" by Osama's crimes, says friend Mouldi Sayeh. In recent years his relatives tried repeatedly to persuade him to give up his holy war on the West and return to the family fold. He angrily rebuffed the pleas. Just as Osama's siblings lamented his narrow fundamentalism, he certainly despised their modern Saudi cosmopolitanism. His brothers and sisters, with their uncovered heads and American condos, came to embrace everything in the world he wished to destroy. By the mid-'90s, he had severed most ties with his family and began plotting more audacious attacks. The family began using a different spelling, Binladin, in part to distance themselves from their notorious relation. The once studious, well-mannered son became an outcast in his family as he became an outlaw in the wider world.

(p. 3) Growing up in a family of 54 brothers and sisters, young Osama bin Laden was something of an only child. The 17th of 24 sons, he barely knew his older brothers. His father, Muhammad bin Laden, kept four wives at a time, divorcing one to add another. The kids of each mother formed tight clans, competing for the stern father's attention and approval. But Osama's mother had no children after him, leaving him without allies. Also, his mother was Syrian, a rarity among Muhammad bin Laden's wives--who were mostly Saudi and Egyptian--further isolating young Osama from his siblings.

(p. 4) The legend of Muhammad bin Laden was a powerful presence in the household. As the story had it, Muhammad was an illiterate bricklayer from

Yemen who had walked to Saudi Arabia as a young man in 1925. Working on a palace construction project, he is said to have caught the attention of the founder of the kingdom, Abdul Aziz, who was impressed with his design ideas. In time, Muhammad bin Laden used his royal connections to turn his modest bricklaying business into a \$5 billion construction company, the largest and richest in the country. The king awarded the bin Ladens prized contracts for construction on the royal palace--and, later, ambitious renovations of Mecca and Medina, Islam's holiest sites. "If you look out over Mecca, every single thing, every minaret, every bit of marble, has been built by the bin Ladens," says Ambrose Carey, who married into the family.

(p. 5) At home, the bin Laden boys adhered to strict Sunni Muslim custom. Their father taught them to be suspicious of Israel and supportive of Palestine. But the children were not sheltered from the world around them. Osama's older brothers and sisters were scattered around the globe, living conventional lives. Before the September attacks, 15 of Osama bin Laden's siblings were living in Europe, and four of his brothers and 17 nieces and nephews were in the United States. One of Osama's brothers, Abdullah, studied at Harvard. In the '90s, the family company endowed \$1 million Binladin Fellowships in both the design and law schools. Osama's oldest brother, Salem, who became head of the family after Muhammad bin Laden died in a 1967 plane crash, was educated in Europe and spent years working and playing in the United States. (A daredevil pilot, he too died in a plane crash, in 1988.) In Boston and New York, bin Laden's younger nieces and nephews were regulars in trendy restaurants and nightclubs, and told friends they were "embarrassed" by their uncle's notoriety.

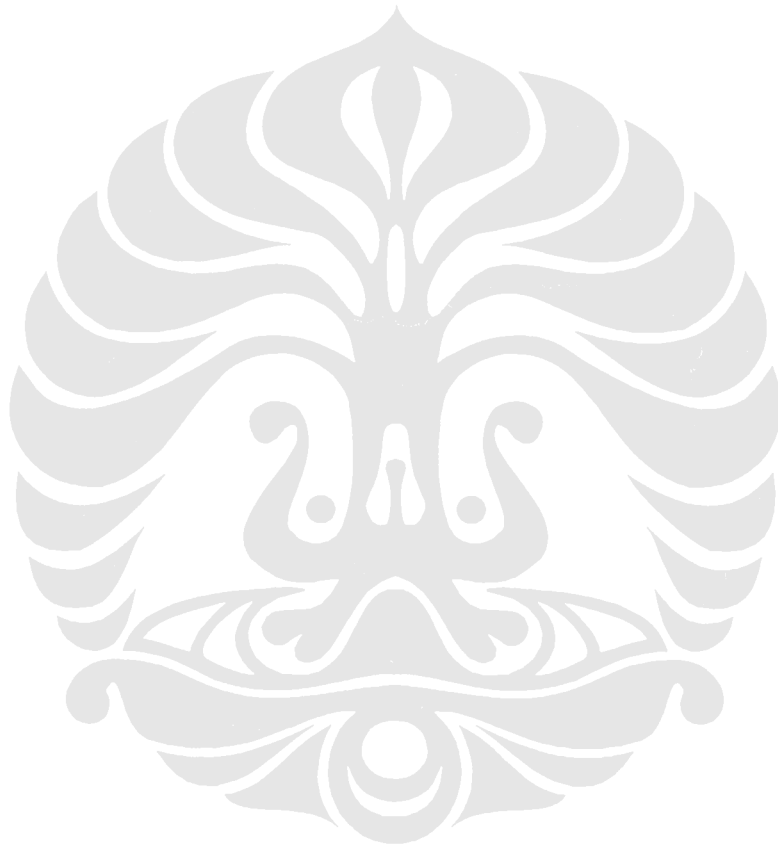
(p. 6) Virtually alone among the children, Osama showed little interest in leaving home to live outside the Mideast. He attended a private Saudi school in Jidda, where he wore trousers and pressed shirts and learned English, but never traveled to the United States, according to a family member. Shunning Western universities, he studied civil engineering at nearby King Abdul Aziz University in Jidda, perhaps with plans to join the family business.

(p. 7) But when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979, Osama bin Laden dropped everything and joined the mujahedin struggle against the occupiers. Others in the family didn't get into the fight, but they respected his devotion to the cause. "He was the hero of the family," says Abdal Bari Atwan, editor of the London-based Al-Quds al-Arabi newspaper. "High officials used to praise and receive him."

(p. 8) By the late '80s, Osama bin Laden had transformed himself into a full-time holy warrior. He started Al Qaeda, his secretive terrorist organization, using his inherited millions to recruit and train young Muslim radicals for a war against the West. When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, the Saudi king's decision to side with the United States infuriated Osama, to whom the choice was clear. Muslims could not support an American war against fellow Muslims--especially not on their own soil. But the rest of the family officially lined up with the anti-Saddam coalition. "Osama kind of forced the family to take sides, and they

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publicly took the only side that they really could--that of the king," says Adil Najam, an international-relations professor at Boston University. By 1994 Osama had become a pariah in his own country. Saudi Arabia revoked his citizenship and the family formally cut him off--though investigators want to know if one or more of his siblings may be secretly helping him with funds and support. As the world condemns their brother's crimes, the Binladin family is furious at Osama for tarnishing what was one of their most precious assets: the family name. The clan condemned the strikes as "repugnant to all religions and humanity," and made clear that beyond their name, they share nothing with the man responsible for the atrocities. The family said they have no relationship at all with Osama bin Laden. After so many years of animosity, the feeling is probably mutual.



Method to the Madness

In this age of celebrity, Osama bin Laden knows the importance of stagecraft. He cultivates an air of mystery, and has a knack for tapping feelings of alienation and anger.

By JEFFREY BARTHOLET | NEWSWEEK
From the magazine issue dated Oct 22, 2001

(p. 1) Sometimes he wears flowing white robes, signifying purity, before the cameras. For his latest video, he opted for an American-style camouflage jacket, offset by a finely folded white turban with a scarflike tail draped ever so gracefully over his left shoulder. His diatribe against America—"the modern world's symbol of paganism"—was videotaped against a rugged backdrop of rock outcroppings, with an assault rifle propped by his side. Bin Laden spoke softly, with almost otherworldly composure and confidence, about "the wind of change" blowing against America. The overall effect was outlaw chic.

(p. 2) Americans watching bin Laden see a monster or a madman. But if he were simply that and nothing more, the "twilight war" ahead would be over quickly. Madmen, after all, generally don't attract the kind of popularity that bin Laden enjoys—which he now hopes to use to even greater effect than his human bombs. There's a method to his madness: to lure the United States into a prolonged conflict that could inflame the Islamic world. That's why the administration wants to lower bin Laden's profile, by talking about him less and reducing his media exposure. National-security adviser Condoleezza Rice last week won agreement from American networks to edit inflammatory language from Al Qaeda videos. She said the tapes may contain secret messages to bin Laden "sleepers" to launch new attacks. But the self-censorship was awkward, at best, and few thought it could be effective in this age of easy Internet access and streaming video.

A Muslim Robin Hood

(p. 3) Bin Laden may be a mass murderer on the run in a ruined land, where women are kept in medieval bondage and no television is allowed. But among a significant number of Muslims, he's also a kind of Robin Hood figure. In the bustling bazaars of the Pakistani border town of Peshawar last week, among stalls selling trinkets and robes, guns and ammo, the most popular vendors were peddling T shirts emblazoned with portraits of "the great holy warrior of Islam." In Palestinian refugee camps, young militants took to the streets crying bin Laden's name. And among some middle-class professionals in Muslim countries, bin Laden's face is used as a welcome screen on their cell phones.

(p. 4) The FBI and CIA have full-time teams probing bin Laden's mystique and his methods. The most urgent question concerns his Qaeda network and its ability to find and recruit 19 men to join a mass suicide plot to kill thousands of civilians. "If we had to sit down and do the psychological vetting to find people like that, we'd never get 19 out of 19," says a former senior intelligence officer for the CIA

who specialized in Afghan operations. "But I don't think they vetted 5,000 people to find the 19. I think there are hundreds of potential fanatics within bin Laden's grasp, willing to give up their lives at his command."

(p. 5) Bin Laden is handsome in his way, and he knows which chords to strike. He appeals to a pervasive sense of humiliation and powerlessness in Islamic countries. Muslims are victims the world over, he says: in Bosnia, Somalia, Palestine, Chechnya and the "land of the two Holy Places"-Saudi Arabia. Like any fanatic, he makes the world simple for people who are otherwise confused, and gives them a sense of mission.

(p. 6) Although he may live in a cave or some similarly primitive lair, he's a master at manipulating the modern media. In the same way Ayatollah Khomeini used audiotapes to spread his revolution, bin Laden uses television and video. In 1996, when he was on the run and seemingly headed toward oblivion, bin Laden issued a "Declaration of War" against America and its allies, and then gave interviews to prominent American journalists in 1997 and 1998. Correspondents from CNN and ABC trekked to his mountain hideout, and Qatar's emerging Al-Jazeera satellite channel, the most open and controversial source of news in Arabic, later became almost his house organ. Bin Laden never took personal credit for specific terror attacks, yet he heaped praise on the attackers. Eventually he got around to producing his own recruitment video. In it, he joyously celebrated last year's bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen, which killed 17 sailors, and wore a Yemeni dagger as a symbol of his identification with the attack. His arguments for the ongoing jihad are offered in language that sounds both poetic and erudite, even to Muslims who deeply oppose him.

Aspiring Caliph

(p. 7) Bin Laden's aim is not simply to terrorize America. The attacks on civilians are a means to an end, which is to overthrow or "reform" regimes across the Muslim world. In his 1996 declaration, he directed much of his venom against Saudi rule. But to "correct" that "illegitimate" regime, bin Laden argued, Muslims had to attack the "Zionist-Crusader alliance" that was the root of the corruption. According to a 1999 FBI memo obtained by NEWSWEEK, bin Laden's desire to "cleanse" the Persian Gulf region is just a start: "He envisions installing a worldwide Islamic government with himself as the caliph."

(p. 8) Bin Laden has been careful to define himself mainly by what he is against, not what he is for. (That way he assures himself the broadest possible support.) But he has held up as a model the Taliban government in Afghanistan, which is the most socially repressive regime in the Muslim world. Women aren't allowed to go to school, men are ordered to grow beards, and neckties, nonreligious music and kite flying are banned. Just about anything that smacks of Western culture is treated like a disease that could infect and cripple the society.

(p. 9) Afghanistan has also provided an ideal base for bin Laden to assemble his militant network. The CIA estimates that up to 20,000 volunteers have passed

through his training camps since 1995. Even if only a quarter of those people are active now, that's a lot of true believers indoctrinated in bin Laden's extremist interpretations of Islam. Most volunteers appear to be Arab or Pakistani, but they've also included Europeans, Chinese, Chechens, and Muslims from Southeast Asia. Some are peasants; others have advanced degrees. One Egyptian volunteer was described by his parents as a young kid who liked to "go up on the roof and read"; an Algerian describes himself as a wayward Muslim "who got used to doing bad things." Al Qaeda vets the volunteers, assigns them to different camps and eventually gives them marching orders.

Screening Recruits

(p. 10) The vetting sometimes involves psychological screening. A Tajik who signed up to fight communists described, for a friend, how he failed one such test. His handlers put him in a room and told him to wait there until someone came for him. He waited two days and part of a third, at which time the handlers came and told him he had failed. The surprised Tajik asked what he had done wrong. He was told that he had pulled back a window curtain several times to look outside—a sign of psychological weakness. Al Qaeda wanted someone who would sit without stirring, at peace with himself, until he was called to the task at hand.

(p. 11) Some volunteers are placed in bin Laden's 055 brigade in Afghanistan, where they fight alongside the Taliban militia in its battle against Afghan foes. Others have been sent to hot spots like Chechnya and Bosnia. Others still are trained in terror skills and encouraged to settle in the West, Asia or Africa. They might set up an Islamic relief organization, an import-export company or a computer business. Sometimes they get help from Al Qaeda operatives to acquire asylum papers, visas or even false passports. The 1999 FBI memo noted that investigators had "revealed a limited network of bin Laden associates in the United States" but warned that "a larger U.S. presence is anticipated." That future is now: NEWSWEEK learned last week that the FBI is actively investigating evidence from "technical sources" that Al Qaeda officials in Afghanistan placed at least four telephone calls to numbers in the United States after Sept. 11. The FBI believes that bin Laden is trying to activate more terror cells, but the phone calls haven't yet produced new leads. (One target number that was tracked down turned out to be The New York Times.)

(p. 12) Al Qaeda sometimes recruits locals, who are given specific duties but little other information about the operation they're involved in. One of the participants in the 1998 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam was a Tanzanian grocery clerk named Khalfan Muhamed. The story of his involvement begins at his local mosque, where he was introduced to the idea that he was part of the worldwide Islamic community and had obligations to fellow Muslims who were suffering in war zones like Bosnia. "He found a sense of meaning and community in the mosque," says Jerrold Post, director of the political-psychology program at George Washington University. "In a rather vague and ... romantic, heroic way, he became inspired to join the struggle, the jihad, and help the Muslim victims."

(p. 13) Muhamed later went to camps in Afghanistan for training and hoped to become a warrior for God on a battlefield in the Balkans or Chechnya. But he never joined Al Qaeda. He was disappointed when told that his training was up and he should go back home. More than a year later, however, a Qaeda operative approached Muhamed on a ferry and asked whether he wanted to help with "a jihad job." He jumped at the chance and handled local logistics-including a safe house and rental car-for the Tanzania bombers. Muhamed was not told of the target until a few days before the bombing. And while Al Qaeda operatives (using aliases) left the country when the mission was done, Muhamed was left behind to clean up. "In essence, he was hung out to dry," says Post.

A Course in Sabotage

(p. 14) Al Qaeda's recruits don't have to be devout Muslims. Ahmed Ressay, the Algerian caught with explosives while crossing into the United States from Canada ahead of the millennium celebrations, was a two-bit criminal in Montreal before joining the jihad. He heard about the Khalden training camp in Afghanistan from Algerian friends and flew there in March 1998 via Pakistan. "Nabil," as Ressay was known in the Qaeda camps, got six months of training in light weapons, rocket launchers, explosives and assassination. He took a course in sabotage-how to blow up targets such as military installations, electric plants, airports and corporate offices. He also donned gas masks with other members of his Algerian cell as they learned how to use cyanide gas to poison Americans and other "enemies of Islam," according to testimony he later gave to a New York court. But Ressay's plan to blow up Los Angeles airport fell apart when U.S. Customs officials at the border with Canada became suspicious because he looked nervous and used a Costco membership card as proof of identification.

(p. 15) In Afghanistan, bin Laden seems to have worked his charisma on the relatively unschooled leaders of the Taliban militia. He provided Mullah Mohammed Omar, the Taliban "Supreme Commander of the Muslim Faithful," with tens of millions of dollars at a time when most of the world had cut him off (for harboring bin Laden). Although cabinet members rarely had contact with Mullah Omar except through written orders, bin Laden could enter his office at will. By some accounts, he became a Rasputin-like figure in the Islamic court.

(p. 16) That, anyway, is the view of Sayid Massoud, the highest-level defector from the Taliban government to date. Massoud, an economist by training, fled to Pakistan last May after serving as "chief of documentation" for the Taliban's council of ministers in Kabul. According to notes made by Pakistani debriefers, Massoud described a system of government in which decrees were issued by Mullah Omar from his office in Kandahar and implemented by ministers. The decrees were often signed twice with the name "Muhammad Omar"-once in the crude hand of Mullah Omar, and again in a highly calligraphic hand that officials widely believed to be that of bin Laden. That double signature meant the order was authentic and had to be obeyed immediately. "The dynamic was that over the

last two or three years the office of the emir became increasingly powerful-not the personality, but the office," says a United Nations official. "As bin Laden and the Arabs controlled the office, they controlled Afghanistan from behind the scenes."

Radicalized in Hamburg

(p. 17) But even such powers of persuasion and control don't help explain the central mysteries of Sept. 11. German investigators still have more questions than answers about key members of the hijack team based in Hamburg, including presumed leader Mohamed Atta. Counterintelligence officials believe the men went to Hamburg five to eight years ago as faithful but not particularly devout Muslims and were radicalized later. They believe the men must have fallen under the tutelage of a particular imam, but they have not been able to identify such a person. Whoever filled that role presumably played on individual vulnerabilities among the recruits. Atta, for instance, was the son of an overbearing father who thought his only boy wasn't tough enough. The son was deeply uncomfortable with girls, unsure of what he was doing with his life, and suddenly found himself alienated in the beer-swilling student society of Hamburg. At some point he became convinced-or someone convinced him-that he was the personal agent of God Almighty.

(p. 18) Bin Laden himself knows something of cultural confusion. Last week a Spanish woman who did not want to be identified told a Bilbao newspaper that she spent time with bin Laden and two of his half brothers back in the summer of 1971. She had a photo of herself and a girlfriend with the three bin Laden boys at Oxford, where they were attending a language school. One of the girls appears in hot pants, and Osama looks like any awkward teenager. The boys took the girls rowing on the Thames and insisted on paying; on another occasion they had a picnic together. An annotation in the photo album describes Osama as "a wonderful kid" who seemed to feel a platonic devotion toward the woman's friend. He was not drawn to the fast life and told the girls that the foreigners gallivanting through London were "a bit crazy."

(p. 19) According to what the woman told El Correo, bin Laden was polite and "deep" for his age. "He told us his mother was extremely beautiful and that this attracted the attention of his father," the woman recalled. The girls detected melancholy in the young bin Laden when he explained that he and his brothers had different mothers and that his was "not the wife of the Quran but a concubine."

(p. 20) Psychological profiling, although practiced by the CIA and other intelligence agencies, only gets you so far. Most kids who feel like outcasts or resent their father or feel confused don't grow up to be mass murderers. Most foreign Muslims who settle in the West adapt to their new surroundings just fine. And psychological profiling cannot explain how Al Qaeda got 19 individuals, all with their own life stories, to conspire in the same apocalyptic ending. All that is known for certain is that the hijackers had holes in their souls that many

(lanjutan)

Americans cannot begin to fathom but that bin Laden and his minions knew how to fill.

