

## ALERT

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*"There can be no acceptance of those who seek to justify the deliberate taking of innocent civilian life, regardless of cause or grievance. If there is one universal principle that all peoples can agree on, surely it is this...It is hard to imagine how the tragedy of September 11 could have been worse, yet the truth is that a single attack involving a nuclear or biological weapon could have killed millions."*

*Kofi Annan, U.N. General Secretary*

*"The world community must show as much its capacity for compassion as for force. The critics will say, 'But how can the world be a community, nations act in their own self-interest.' Of course, they do, but what is the lesson of the financial markets, climate change, international terrorism, nuclear proliferation or world trade? It is that our self-interest and our mutual interest are today inextricably woven together."*

*Tony Blair, U.K. Prime Minister*

[The impact of the September 11 terrorist attack and its aftermath has sent a series of shockwaves through our lives and launched the world into a state of crisis. In the October issue, and again this month, I have explored some of the overriding concerns and in the process ranged far beyond issues strictly concerned with computer security. It has been unavoidable for me, as I am certain it has been for you in your work. As we all struggle to get our bearings post-September 11, it is clear that many realms—including national security, counterintelligence, foreign policy and Constitutional law, as well as physical security, personnel security, etc.—intersect with computer security in the period that stretches out before us. In these two articles, I have tried to give you some information you might have missed, as well as my own take on some of its implications. Next month, the *Alert* will return to normal broadcasting.]

NATO Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS), with crews from twelve different nations, are patrolling American skies. National Guard troops are on duty at the country's major airports. U.S. bombers and British submarines are blasting away at Taliban and al-Qaeda sites in Afghanistan. The U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division is operating out of a remote airport in the former Soviet republic of Uzbekistan.

According to *Forbes*, the hottest topic on the Google Internet search engine in the aftermath of the attack was "Nostradamus," the legendary 16th century soothsayer one of whose prophecies some say was fulfilled on September 11.

The World Bank is preparing to increase this year's lending by \$800 million because it estimates that the global economic impact of the terrorist attack and its aftermath could "kill 40,000 children in poor countries."

According to the Associated Press, U.S. authorities have "foiled at least four bombing plots overseas" since Sept. 11. Over seven hundred people have been detained in the U.S., over 225 people have been rounded up in 40 other countries.

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Thirty-one people in the office of U.S. Senate majority leader Tom Daschle (D-SD), and two more staffers in the office of Sen. Russ Feingold (D-WI) have tested positive for exposure to anthrax. The U.S. House of Representatives will be closed for five days while it is searched. The U.S. Senate will remain open until a scheduled recess occurs at the end of the week.

Although perhaps not a devastating biological warfare attack, at the very least, the anthrax attacks on the Senate and other high-profile targets are a serious distraction to investigators searching for the terrorists, a debilitating drain on public health resources and a severe psychological blow to the American psyche. The delivery system? Snail mail.

Largely ignored in the ear-shattering, non-stop din of war and woe was one bit of good news. The *USA Today* reports that the official estimate of people missing and dead after the WTC attack has dropped by nearly 1,400 and is "expected to decline further" as duplicate names are purged from the list of those reported missing.

### **Osama's cybercafe**

On Oct. 4, ABC News reported that the terrorists "may" have communicated over the Internet using steganography. Did you notice the "may" in there? That's how ABC News actually worded the lead of their story.

"Western intelligence officials say they have learned that instructors at Osama bin Laden's camps in remote Afghanistan trained his followers in the high-tech secret-messaging technique. And French investigators believe that suspects arrested in an alleged plot to blow up the U.S. Embassy in Paris were to get the go-ahead for the attack via a message hidden in a picture posted on the Internet, former French defense official Alexis Debat said.

"One of the men in custody (Kamil Daoudi, who worked in a cybercafe), described by French officials as a computer nerd well-versed in the messaging technique, was captured with a notebook full of secret codes. 'This code book is major breakthrough in the investigation,' said Debat.

"Suspected ringleader Mohamed Atta was seen repeatedly by witnesses using his hotmail account at public libraries in Florida to surf the Internet, downloading what appeared to be pictures of children and scenes of the Middle East."

Of course, on June 19, three months before the September 11 attack, the *USA Today* ran the following story.

"Through weeks of interviews with U.S. law-enforcement officials and experts, *USA Today* has learned new details of how extremists hide maps and photographs of terrorist tar-

gets—and post instructions for terrorist activities—on sports chat rooms, pornographic bulletin boards and other popular Web sites. Citing security concerns, officials declined to name the sites. Experts say it's difficult for law enforcement to intercept the messages.

"Officials and experts say the Internet is a new form of the 'dead drop,' a Cold War-era term for where spies left information. Officials and experts say the messages are scrambled using free encryption programs set up by groups that advocate privacy on the Internet."

The U.S.'s law enforcement and intelligence agencies would do themselves and those they serve a great service by sharing some hard evidence (at the appropriate time) of such on-line activity conducted by al-Qaeda or other world-class terrorist organizations so that the public could see with its own eyes what's going on, how their investigations have been thwarted and how it could be combated in the future. Other-

wise, there will be the assumption that either there is little more than smoke and mirrors to this dimension of covert activity or that law enforcement and intelligence somehow failed in cyberspace.

### **Is your community ready?**

The scope and impact of the terrorist attack on the WTC delivers a poignant illustration of our interconnectedness and a humbling lesson in the importance of comprehensive disaster recovery and business continuity planning.

On September 24, *Associated Press* reported that when the WTC towers collapsed and burned, "they sent off clouds of scorched paper: the bills, checks and contracts that anchored the life of the buildings' 14,000 businesses."

On September 28, the *New York Times* reported that the terrorist attack also "destroyed crucial links to the state computers that manage welfare, Medicaid and food stamp cases, leaving thousands of poor people in New York City and nearby counties without normal access to emergency cash, food and health care."

According to a survey of 456 cities in the United States conducted by the National League of Cities ([www.nlc.org](http://www.nlc.org)), 52 percent said they will conduct overall reassessments of their terrorism plans. Most surveyed cities (55 percent) said they have terrorism response or prevention plans in place, 12 percent said they are developing plans, and 32 percent said they have no plans.

Plans are more common among larger cities: 83 percent of larger cities compared to 59 percent of medium and 40 percent of small cities. Forty-eight percent of cities surveyed reported having had anti-terrorist training. Training had occurred in 85 percent of the larger cities, 50 percent of medium, and 32 percent of small cities.

**On September 24, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) acknowledged that the designs for the concrete containment buildings housing the country's nuclear reactors "did not specifically contemplate attacks by aircraft such as Boeing 757s and 767s, and nuclear plants were not designed to withstand such crashes."**

### Cyber attacks on the power grid are a threat, but...

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One hour or so up the Hudson from the smoldering ruins of the WTC, the *Journal News* reported that nuclear industry experts asserted that such an attack on the Indian Point nuclear power plant in Buchanan, could "breach either of the two reactors or the fuel storage pool" and cause "lethal contamination of everything within fifty miles."

Meanwhile, on Oct. 12, ABC News reported that the NRC pulled its Web site from public access, saying it had previously been making available sensitive information that could be used in a terrorist attack on U.S. nuclear plants.

"A spokesman for the NRC said that prior to the Sept. 11 attacks, the agency had made freely available via its Web site extensive materials on NRC operations, including the geo-spatial coordinates of all 103 operating nuclear plants in the country as well as 'thousands and thousands of highly technical documents that go back decades.'"

### Larry Ellison's gambit

On September 22nd, *San Jose Mercury News* reported that Oracle CEO Larry Ellison raised the issue of a national identification card and even offered to donate the software.

"Under Ellison's proposal, millions of Americans would be fingerprinted and the information would be placed on a database used by airport security officials to verify identities of travelers at airplane gates.

"We need a national ID card with our photograph and thumbprint digitized and embedded in the ID card. We need a database behind that, so when you're walking into an airport and you say that you are Larry Ellison, you take that card and put it in a reader and put your thumb down and that system confirms that this is Larry Ellison."

The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press says that seven of 10 Americans it surveyed favored a requirement that citizens carry a national identity card at all times to show to a police officer upon request. (There was less support for government monitoring of telephone calls, e-mails and credit card purchases.)

Authentication was a big problem when I started writing about cyber security eight years ago, and it is still a big problem today—both for network security and e-commerce—despite all the hype about PKI. Oh, there are reasonable solutions—for example, smart cards—depending upon the application and the environment. But few organizations are willing to pay for them. Now we're talking about devel-

oping strong authentication for citizens and non-citizens. This issue is bigger than either network security or e-commerce security.

Stronger authentication at all levels of commerce and government would be costly and would not be hack-proof, but it would certainly be a significant improvement. There needs to be an informed debate about implementing "national ID cards" that would incorporate some biometrics so that your identity can be authenticated by something you are (your body) and something you have (your card).

The genie is already out of the bottle.

Your grocery purchases are recorded in minute detail, your Web surfing activity is too. Anyone willing to search your snail mail or use some social engineering techniques can get a hold of your social security number, and once they have that little tidbit they can take on your identity and wreak

havoc on your personal finances.

How can you "protect" a "privacy" that doesn't exist?

Privacy has to be created, and to create it you need security. The ways in which the two are inextricably bound elude many people on both sides of the imaginary wall.

The concerns of civil libertarians and "Netizens" about the potential abuse of technologies such as Carnivore are understandable. There has been documented governmental abuse in the past. But there has also been a disproportionate lack of concern over the threat to the individual, and to society as a whole, poised by other threats such as cyber-criminals, corporations operating with little or no fear of government regulations, and yes, terrorists.

### Identity theft can be lethal

Ellison was right to hit on the authentication issue.

On Sept. 26, *Knigh Ridder* reported that "about twenty" of those arrested in the U.S. investigation so far had been charged with fraudulently trying to obtain licenses allowing them to transport hazardous materials (hazmat) such as fuel, chemicals, medical waste and explosives.

One driver's license examiner in Pittsburgh, PA. helped at least eighteen men get their hazmat permits without taking the required tests between July 1999 and February 2000. He worked with a middleman named Abdul Mohamman, and received \$50 to \$100 for each person he aided.

On September 27, *MSNBC's* Bob Sullivan wrote an insightful piece on the role of identity theft in the perpetration of the September 11 attack.

"Not long after the FBI published its list of the nineteen hijackers, published reports discredited at least nine of the names as fake. Several alleged hijackers spoke to reporters in Arab newspapers, proclaiming they were alive, innocent and the victims of identity theft. Others simply had the un-

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happy coincidence of having the same name as a hijacker.

"But in at least two cases—Salem Alhazmi, allegedly on the flight that crashed into the Pentagon, and Abdulaziz Alomari, whose flight struck the World Trade Center's north tower—identity theft victims told journalists their passports were stolen in burglaries several years ago. That raises the likelihood that the two hijackers entered the United States using false papers—in one case, papers that were stolen on U.S. soil. Why weren't they stopped at the border?"

"Because no single worldwide agency keeps track of stolen passports, experts say.

"Identity theft is common in the Middle East, according to Boaz Guttman, retired chief superintendent of the Israeli police force's National Unit for Fraud Investigation."

Incredibly, as Sullivan notes, "during the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, bin Laden agents murdered 12 Western-educated men for the express purpose of stealing their paperwork."

On Oct. 12, the *Associated Press* reported the Canadian government has decided to issue all immigrants a new plastic photo ID card called the "Maple Leaf," which will contain "fraud-proofing" technology including laser imprinting and a magnetic strip and cost \$40.

#### **Sen. McCain's bill on aviation security passes 100-0**

In the Oct. issue of the *Alert*, I briefly highlighted the sad fate of some of the key recommendations included in the 1997 White House commission of "Aviation Safety and Security." It was heartening to see that at least National Public Radio and *USA Today* also ran related stories.

Unfortunately, the question of what to do about air travel security has run into political trouble—again.

On September 27, the headline of the *Los Angeles Times* read "Bush says skies are safe; critics are unsatisfied."

Indeed, Bush stood on a tarmac at Chicago's O'Hare urged Americans to "get on board" and "enjoy life."

That's certainly sound advice both for the psychological health of individuals as well as the economic health of the country. But whether the proposals that Bush outlined are sufficient is a subject of heated debate.

An impressive, bi-partisan group of U.S. Senators led by John McCain (R-AZ) and Ernest Hollings (D-SC) agree with Bush that money should be spent to reinvigorate and expand the federal sky marshall program, fortify cockpit doors and require background checks on foreign nationals who want flight training. But McCain and Hollings want the federal government to take over responsibility for screening passengers and their baggage at the U.S.'s major airports.

On Oct. 10, in a New York Times op-ed piece on "The

Public Interest," Paul Krugman provides some clarity.

"Study after study has urged the federalization of airport security, for pretty much the same reasons city governments take responsibility for firefighting. Maybe we don't expect airport security personnel to put their lives on the line, but we do place our lives in their hands. To that list of reasons has been added another: the need to share sensitive information about potential terrorists. Did recent events finally persuade the doubters?"

***"Study after study has urged the federalization of airport security, for pretty much the same reasons city governments take responsibility for firefighting. Maybe we don't expect airport security personnel to put their lives on the line, but we do place our lives in their hands. To that list of reasons has been added another: the need to share sensitive information about potential terrorists. Did recent events finally persuade the doubters?"***

"Not a chance. Representative Bob Barr, Republican of Georgia, put it this way: 'To me as a conservative, I look at a problem and ask, Is this a federal function?'"

"Think about that for a minute. Terrorists board planes in Boston, and use those planes to kill thousands of innocent people in New York — and Barr still can't see why airport security is a federal function? What would convince him that a federal role is warranted? One suspects that if the U.S. Army didn't already exist, he would oppose its creation — maybe he would argue that state militias, assisted by a few

independent contractors (that is, companies of mercenaries) could do the job."

On Oct. 11, McCain-Hollings bill passed in the Senate 100-0. But the White House is still fighting federalizing of airport security, and its allies in the House, notably Tom DeLay (R-TX), that are dead-set against it.

#### **El Al's toll free number is...**

Meanwhile, many experts are pointing to El Al, Israel's national airline, as the shining proof of what works.

All El Al terminals, both in Israel and overseas, are guarded by armed security personnel. There are also armed undercover security agents on all El Al planes.

At check-in, El Al uses sophisticated detection equipment to uncover explosives. They also place all cargo in decompression chambers prior to takeoff.

El Al passenger screening is not just a formality. Some passengers (for example, Israeli Jews) are only asked a few questions, others have all their baggage searched thoroughly. Yes, they use profiling, and yes, the profiling they use would seem offensive to many U.S. citizens and quite possible prove unconstitutional here.

Again, like the creation of "national ID cards," the use of profiling—what is acceptable and what is not acceptable—demands an informed national debate.

By "informed" I mean that security professionals, law enforcement professionals and intelligence professionals must educate lawmakers, journalists and through them the public at large about what *can* be done so that a consensus can be developed about what *should* be done.

However, the implementation of El Al's other counter-measures would only require dollars and determination.

### **Intelligence and law enforcement troubles highlighted**

In the Oct. *Alert*, I included some of the early indications that something is broken in regard to law enforcement and intelligence. What is broken, however, remains to be determined. It is very easy to point fingers. The problem may well originate in current laws or in what happens up stream from the law enforcement or intelligence professionals on the street.

The investigators, prosecutors and operatives I know are bright, dedicated public servants who do a thankless job—one in which numerous successes are cloaked in secrecy and numerous frustrations go unrelieved.

Here are some more troubling news items.

On Sept. 24, the *Washington Post* reported that the CIA gave the FBI the names of about 100 suspected associates of Osama bin Laden thought to be bound for or already in the United

States over the last two years, including an August 23 cable that bore the names of two of the September 11 hijackers.

"The agency's inability to find Khalid Al-Midhar and Nawaq Alhazmi before the attacks illustrates that even improved communication with the CIA does not guarantee swift action or success. On Aug. 23, the CIA cabled the FBI and other agencies that they should be on alert for two men with possible links to terrorists. Al-Midhar had been videotaped months earlier meeting with a suspect in the bombing of the USS Cole, and the CIA advisory was "not a routine matter," an official familiar with the events said.

The newspaper also reported that the FBI had been developing evidence that international terrorists were using U.S. flight schools to learn to fly jumbo jets since 1996 but had failed to capitalize on it even though less than a month before the attack, the owners of a flight school in Minnesota tipped them off to the fact that Zacarias Moussaoui had paid cash for lessons on how to fly passenger jets.

By Sept. 1, French intelligence officials notified the FBI that Moussaoui was a 'radical Islamic extremist' with possible ties to Afghani terrorist training camps.

On Oct. 14, the *New York Times* reported that the Central Intelligence Agency "intercepted a cryptic but chilling message last year from a member of al Qaeda, who boasted that Osama bin Laden was planning to carry out a 'Hiroshima; against America.

"The mention of 'Hiroshima' by a group that had repeatedly struck United States interests around the world since 1998 set off an immediate but fruitless search for further evidence. But intelligence officials now acknowledge that they never imagined that Mr. bin Laden's organization had

the ability to kill thousands of people in coordinated attacks on the American homeland.

"Looking back through the prism of Sept. 11, officials now say that the intercepted message was a telling sign of a drastic shift in the ambitions and global reach of al Qaeda during the last three years. Clearly, the officials agree, the United States failed to grasp the organization's transformation from an obscure group of Islamic extremists into the world's most dangerous terrorists."

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### **Senator Shelby takes a principled stand**

There are so many questions to answer. But who will ask them and will they be allowed to pursue the truth? If not, what will we have learned from this tragedy?

On Oct. 8, *Roll Call* reported that Senator Richard Shelby (R-ALA) reiterated his statement that the September 11 terrorist attack "represented a massive failure on the part of the U.S. intelligence community and that his panel should investigate the matter on its own,

without the help of any kind of special commission."

"Shelby's comments came in response to an Oct. 4 *Roll Call* story that quoted House Select Intelligence Chairman Porter Goss (R-FLA) as saying that the attacks should not be blamed on U.S. intelligence operatives. Goss also branded as 'inappropriate' Shelby's recent calls for CIA Director George Tenet to resign.

"This idea that you don't critically evaluate people in high positions during a crisis is nonsense," Shelby said.

### **Will "modest steps" tarnish the Bill of Rights?**

Meanwhile, Attorney General Ashcroft delivered the administration's "Anti-Terrorism Act" to the Congress and told them he was in a hurry. President Bush characterized the proposals as "modest steps." Vice-President Cheney said he wanted the legislation passed within the week.

However, House and Senate members from across the political spectrum—left, right and vital center—took the time to strike a balance that would help the DoJ in its struggle with terrorism while protecting the Constitution from bad, hastily improvised law that could inadvertently undermine its sacred intent and clear edicts.

Whether you agree with the Bush administration proposals or not, it should be obvious to anyone who has read the Bill of Rights that they are not merely "modest steps."

House negotiators accepted some of the Bush proposals, while altering others. For example, they agreed to broaden wiretap authority in terrorism cases to all telephones used by the suspect rather than the requiring separate wiretap authorities for each telephone. But they set an expiration

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date for the expanded wiretap authorities. The Bush administration had wanted these powers to be permanent.

The House compromise allowed law enforcement to detain non-U.S. citizens without charges for up to seven days, but insisted that longer detentions require higher standards than the administration wanted. The House compromise also narrowed the Bush administration's definition of computer crimes that could be considered as acts of terrorism to exclude more common types of hacking activity.

These alterations and the others developed by the House Judiciary Committee are all reasonable safeguards.

The House compromise did not give the Attorney General everything that he asked for, but it certainly wasn't dictated by the ACLU or the EFF either. It was indeed the legislative branch of the federal government at work.

Nevertheless, as the *Chicago Tribune* reported on Oct. 13, although "Democrats and Republicans on the Judiciary Committee spent weeks crafting a bill that both parties could accept," it was a wasted effort.

"To their dismay, that bill was jettisoned without their input in favor of a version more acceptable to the White House. House Republican leaders brought a new bill to the floor that none of the Judiciary Committee members had seen. Judiciary Committee members said the new bill provided vastly expanded powers to law enforcement without the checks that they had insisted upon."

### **Sunset provisions would provide fail-safe**

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of this nasty bit of business on the threshing floor of the U.S. Capital is the drive to scuttle the "sunset" provisions.

These measures may be needed under the extraordinary circumstances, a few may even need to be permanent changes in law (if they are found to be constitutional), but to demand both speedy passage and no "sunset" provisions—particularly in the light of mounting indications of major breakdowns in intelligence and law enforcement—is unseemly. In response to arguments for "sunset" clauses, Attorney General Ashcroft remarked, "I can't guarantee that terrorism will sunset in two years or five years."

Well, no elected official who wanted to stay in office would ever deny law enforcement a continuation of these troublesome powers at the expiration date if the current struggle or its equivalent was still underway.

By the time you read this article, I am certain that the Anti-Terrorism Act will have passed. A compromise on "sunset provisions" would reassure a lot of citizens who are concerned about the future of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. I doubt it will make it into the version that is signed. I hope I am wrong.

### **Evil dies hard**

In the first few days after the terrorist strike, President Bush said that bin Laden was "Wanted: Dead or Alive." Several days later, he said the U.S. was in "hot pursuit."

Of course, the U.S. has been after him for awhile.

In 1996, the U.S. attempted to negotiate a three-way deal in which the Sudan would turn him over to the Saudi Arabia for trial and inevitable execution. The deal fell through. The Sudanese were willing to cooperate, but the Saudis were afraid or unwilling to take on eliminating bin Laden.

In 1997, a CIA squad operating out of Pakistan made an abortive attempt to snatch bin Laden out of Afghanistan.

After the August 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, then-President Clinton ordered a cruise missile attack on bin Laden's camps, which he escaped by only a few hours.

In 1999, Pakistan was going to send 60 Pakistani commandoes into Afghanistan to kill or capture bin Laden. In return, the U.S. was going to lift all sanctions imposed because of Pakistan's nuclear weapons programs. But the gov-

ernment was overthrown in a military coup and the new leadership refused to carry out the mission.

Yes, evil dies hard.

On September 28, prior to the launching of the full-scale air campaign, *USA Today* reported that U.S. special forces teams of three to five soldiers, backed by Blackhawk MH-60K helicopters, had been inside of Afghanistan for two weeks, "looking for Osama bin Laden," but were "having difficulty locating him."

Hopefully, in spite of the difficulty, bin Laden and his cohorts will be put out of business.

### **Not "war," not a "crusade"**

On Sept. 19, the *Chicago Tribune* reported on President Bush's meeting with French President Jacques Chirac, the first foreign leader to visit the White House in the attack's aftermath. Bush used the word "war" four times before Chirac corrected him in public. "I don't know whether we should use the word 'war,' Chirac remarked. "But what I can say is that now we are faced with a conflict of a completely new nature." Bush switched to using the term "campaign" for the rest of the photo-op.

Earlier in the day, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer was doing damage-control on Bush's error in referring to the U.S.-led response to the attack as a "crusade."

Bush's reference to Christianity's medieval "holy war" was an insult to the world's one billion Muslims, the overwhelming majority of whom have no sympathy for bin Laden and whose support will be necessary if Bush is serious about destroying bin Laden and his ilk.

The statement was immediately seized upon by bin Laden and others. In a typed statement, bin Laden called the conflict to come "the new Christian-Jewish crusade led by the

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big crusader Bush under the flag of the cross.”

Indeed, Bush was using the very terminology with which bin Laden exhorts the Arab masses to rise up against the U.S. and the Arab regimes allied with it. For example, in his 1996 jihad declaration, bin Laden condemned U.S. troops stationed in Saudi Arabia as “crusader forces” and denounced their presence as an “occupation.”

But Bush was not the only Western leader to misspeak.

On Sept. 27, according to Agence France Press, Italy’s new Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, provided some more fodder for anti-Western propagandists throughout the Arab world by saying that the West “should be confident of the superiority of our civilization,” and he urged Europe to “reconstitute itself on the basis of our Christian roots.”

Berlusconi’s remarks were reputed by the head of an EU mission to the Middle East as “not acceptable” and “not in line with European decisions and European values.”

### And, hopefully, not “Le Piege”

President Bush has stated over and over that bin Laden is attacking “freedom.” But this statement is inaccurate.

Osama bin Laden is not attacking “freedom.” He is indifferent to U.S.-style “freedom,” he sees no value in it. He is attacking U.S. power. That’s something he values. He wants to increase his own stature in the region by delivering a devastating blow to the “oppressor.”

Consider bin Laden’s goals.

He wants to force a U.S. retreat from of the Middle East. He wants to bring down those regimes—principally, Egypt and Saudi Arabia—that are allied with the U.S. He wants to impose a perversion of Islam on the Arab masses.

And, of course, he wants the destruction of Israel.

On Sept. 20, *Le Monde* ran a front-page analysis by Gilles Kepel of the Paris-based Institute for Political Studies, entitled “Le Piege,” or “The Trap.”

According to Kepel, bin Laden’s desire is to lure the U.S. into bloody and protracted military action in Afghanistan in the belief that heavy Muslim casualties will enrage the Arab masses against the West and spur them to rise up against its allies in the region.

On Sept. 25, the Associated Press reported the U.S. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld said that the goal of the administration’s efforts was to “reduce the global reach of terrorism, not eliminate it.” Rumsfeld statement is a long way away from President Bush’s “We will rid the world of evildoers.”

### The stakes are very high

This world situation is exceedingly dangerous, and it could well spin out of control quickly and irretrievably.

Regimes in Pakistan (which has twenty to thirty nuclear weapons), Indonesia (the fourth largest population on the planet), Egypt (the lynchpin of hope for peace in the Middle East) and Saudi Arabia (the epicenter of the world’s oil production) are all at risk from extremists and uprisings.

At the other end of this tunnel, the world will either be a better place or we will all be plunged into WWII.

President Bush has met twice with hard liner Ariel Sharon, the Israeli Prime Minister, since he took over. But he has yet to meet with with Palestinian leader Yassir Arafat. This apparent shunning of Arafat sends a very bad

message to the Middle East.

The violence is not a one-way street.

On Oct. 2, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that Israeli foreign minister Shimon Perez, co-winner (with Arafat) of a Nobel Peace Prize for the 1993 Oslo accords, has accused a senior Israeli military officer of wanting to assassinate Arafat.

“Let’s say we assassinate him, what happens next? With all the criticism of Arafat, he is the Palestinian who recognizes the map on which Jordan and Israel exist. In his place will come Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah.”

On Oct. 13, the *Chicago Tribune* reported that “although the Bush administration insists it never stopped working toward Mideast peace, U.S. Secretary of State Powell, preparing for a trip to Pakistan and India, acknowledged that the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon added a new intensity.

“Every day we push both sides,” Powell said. “We started doing this the day after Sept. 11.”

On Oct. 15, standing side by side with Yassir Arafat, British Prime Minister Tony Blair called for the creation of a “viable Palestinian state” in an effort to revive stalled Middle East peace talks and defuse anti-Western feelings in the Arab world. Arafat, for his part, condemned the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks denounced bin Laden’s perversion of Islam clearly and without the least equivocation.

(Ironically, on the same day Blair was meeting with Arafat, President Bush was meeting with Berlusconi.)

Other voices of experience have also spoken out.

On Oct. 9, the *Washington Post* reported the insights of former President Bill Clinton.

After citing “at least fifteen terrorist attacks thwarted during his administration,” Clinton said that Bush’s fight against terrorism on military, economic, legal and diplomatic fronts was “key,” but that it was also “necessary to work to alleviate the poverty and oppression that creates disaffected people ripe for terrorists’ arguments.” That should include increased debt relief for poor nations, AIDS-fighting funds and democracy-promoting efforts, Clinton said.

“Terrorists feel they can recruit among the dispossessed. We must do more to reduce the pool of potential terrorists.”

On Oct. 10, the *Daily Telegraph* reported that U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, recently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, has called for a comprehensive anti-terrorism treaty.

“In a veiled message that the U.S. should wage its campaign against the terrorism under the U.N. umbrella, Mr. Annan said: ‘The legitimacy that the UN conveys can ensure that the greatest number of states is able and willing to take the necessary and difficult steps—diplomatic, legal and political—that are needed to defeat terrorism.’”

If we can get the Israeli-Palestinian peace train back on track; if we can work with moderate Arab regimes to “reduce the pool of potential terrorists” by alleviating the underlying economic and political problems; if we work within the global framework of the U.N. toward an international terrorism treaty as well as other relevant conventions (for example, weapons of mass destruction); if we accept responsibility for our own security, law enforcement and intelligence failures, and act decisively and diligently to improve them in real ways—we will avoid the worst and return to the 21st Century.