Operation *Enduring Freedom* and the Conflict in Afghanistan: An Update

This paper provides an update on developments since the start of Operation *Enduring Freedom*, the US-led military campaign in Afghanistan which commenced on 7 October 2001. It starts with an examination of the stated objectives and outlines the military components. The paper then looks at the situation in Afghanistan, both in terms of the conflict and the humanitarian situation, and discusses efforts to form a stable future administration. It also contains information on developments in the United States and outlines international reaction to the current situation.

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Summary of main points

This paper provides an update on developments since the start of Operation *Enduring Freedom*, the US-led military campaign in Afghanistan which commenced on 7 October 2001. It starts with an examination of the stated objectives of the campaign and outlines its military components. The paper then looks at the situation on the ground in Afghanistan, both in terms of the conflict and the humanitarian situation, and discusses the ongoing efforts to form a stable future administration. It also contains information on developments in the United States and outlines regional, British and international reaction to the current situation.

More detail on the background and developments prior to the start of military action is contained in Library Research Paper 01/72, *11 September 2001: the response*, of 3 October 2001. The earlier paper examines the reaction within the United States, the United Kingdom and the wider international community to the 11 September attacks on the USA. It contains background information on the main suspect, Osama bin Laden, and the *al-Qaeda* network, and looks in detail at the situation in Afghanistan, Pakistan and the wider region. It also details the military options available and the relevant issues of international law.

Researchers in the International Affairs and Defence Section and the Economic Policy and Statistics Section are covering different aspects of the crisis, and have taken lead authorship over the relevant sections of this paper. For further information on the Middle East and Central Asia, including Afghanistan and the bin Laden network, contact Tim Youngs (Ext. 6765); for military aspects contact Mark Oakes (Ext. 3852); for South Asia, including Pakistan, and aspects of international law contact Paul Bowers (Ext. 3621); for the United States contact Carole Andrews (Ext. 3978); and for European involvement contact Vaughne Miller (Ext. 4327). For information on the humanitarian situation and international relief efforts, contact Patsy Richards (Ext. 4904).
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I Objectives of the Campaign

A. Legal statement

On 7 October 2001 the USA and the UK reported to the United Nations Security Council that they had commenced the use of military force in self-defence. This was in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter, which recognises 'the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence' and requires states to report such actions immediately.

The US notification stated that

my Government has obtained clear and compelling information that the Al-Qaeda organization, which is supported by the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, had a central role in the attacks [against the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania].

It went on,

the attacks on 11 September 2001 and the ongoing threat to the United States and its nationals posed by the Al-Qaeda organization have been made possible by the decision of the Taliban regime to allow the parts of Afghanistan that it controls to be used by this organization as a base of operation. Despite every effort by the United States and the international community, the Taliban regime has refused to change its policy. From the territory of Afghanistan, the Al-Qaeda organization continues to train and support agents of terror who attack innocent people throughout the world and target United States nationals and interests in the United States and abroad.

In response to these attacks, and in accordance with the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence, United States armed forces have initiated actions designed to prevent and deter further attacks on the United States. These actions include measures against Al-Qaeda terrorist training camps and military installations of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. In carrying out these actions, the United States is committed to minimizing civilian casualties and damage to civilian property. In addition, the United States will continue its humanitarian efforts to alleviate the suffering of the people of Afghanistan. We are providing them with food, medicine and supplies.

The USA also reserved the right to take other actions:

we may find that our self-defence requires further actions with respect to other organizations and other States.

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1 Letter from Ambassador John Negroponte, Permanent Representative of the USA to the UN in New York, to the President of the Security Council, S/2001/946, 7 October 2001.
The British notification stated that

the United Kingdom has military assets engaged in operations against targets we know to be involved in the operation of terror against the United States of America, the United Kingdom and other countries around the world, as part of a wider international effort.

These forces have now been employed in exercise of the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence, recognised in Article 51, following the terrorist outrage of 11 September, to avert the continuing threat of attacks from the same source.2

It went on to state that

this military action … is directed against Usama Bin Laden’s Al Qaida terrorist organisation and the Taliban regime that is supporting it.

The notification also mentioned the evidence that the British Government had presented to Parliament on the role of al-Qaeda, which showed that Usama bin Laden and his Al Qaida terrorist organisation have the capability to execute major terrorist attacks, claimed credit for past attacks on United States targets, and have been engaged in a concerted campaign against the United States and its allies. One of their stated aims is the murder of US citizens and attacks on the United States’ allies.3

It argued that “extreme care” had been exercised in the selection of targets in order to minimise the risk to civilians, and reiterated the point that the military actions were not “directed against the Afghan population, nor against Islam.”

The use of force in self-defence is subject to two main considerations: necessity and proportionality.

The USA and UK argue that their action is necessary on a number of grounds. Al-Qaeda has the means and motivation to conduct further attacks, and, according to the Prime Minister,

there is nothing hidden about Bin Laden’s agenda. He openly espouses the language of terror; has described terrorising Americans as ‘a religious and logical


obligation’; and in February 1998 signed a fatwa stating that ‘the killing of Americans and their civilian and military allies is a religious duty.’

Mr bin Laden made a statement on 7 October 2001 in which he directed a comment at “the United States … and its people:”

I swear by Almighty God who raised the heavens without pillars that neither the United States nor he who lives in the United States will enjoy security before we can see it as a reality in Palestine and before all the infidel armies leave the land of Mohammed, may God’s peace and blessing be upon him.

For two years the Taliban has failed to comply with the UN Security Council’s demands, in its Resolution 1267 of 15 October 1999, that it hand over Mr bin Laden to justice and cease providing sanctuary to international terrorists. During those two years further attacks have been carried out by al-Qaeda.

Proportionality is judged in terms of the need to repel those attacks against which an act of self-defence is aimed. This explains the emphases on military operations targeted at the terrorist training camps and infrastructure which supports the al-Qaeda network, and on breaking the Taliban’s capacity to control territory in which al-Qaeda may find sanctuary. This targeting is also relevant to the humanitarian laws of war, as is the more general statement that risk to civilians will be minimised.

B. Political statements

At the start of the campaign President Bush gave an address to the nation, in which he expanded on its aims. He reiterated that actions against al-Qaeda terrorist training camps and Taliban military installations were designed to “disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations, and to attack the military capability of the Taliban regime.”

He indicated that other methods had failed:

more than two weeks ago, I gave Taliban leaders a series of clear and specific demands: Close terrorist training camps; hand over leaders of the al Qaeda network; and return all foreign nationals, including American citizens, unjustly detained in your country. None of these demands were met.

He situated the military action within the wider campaign against terrorism:

this military action is a part of our campaign against terrorism, another front in a war that has already been joined through diplomacy, intelligence, the freezing of

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4 HC Deb 4 October 2001, c672.
5 Statement on the Qatari al-Jazeera satellite television channel.
6 Presidential address to the nation, 7 October 2001.
financial assets and the arrests of known terrorists by law enforcement agents in 38 countries.

He spoke of a conflict to be won by “a patient accumulation of successes.”

Prime Minister Tony Blair made a statement in Downing Street. He drew attention to the evidence that al-Qaeda had carried out the 11 September attacks and to the role played by the Taliban in harbouring and supporting the network. He also reiterated the time period during which the Taliban had failed to hand over the terrorists whom they harboured, and said that “it is clear beyond doubt that they will not do this.”

He characterised the operation as having three equally important parts, “military, diplomatic and humanitarian.” For the military component he indicated that the specific objectives were “to eradicate Osama bin Laden’s network of terror and to take action against the Taliban regime.” On the diplomatic front he drew attention to the “coalition of support” from governments abroad, including not only those who were likely to be involved in some way in the military action but others “in all parts of the world.” On the humanitarian front Mr Blair stated that “we are assembling a coalition of support for refugees in and outside Afghanistan.” President Bush indicated that the USA would “drop food, medicine and supplies to the starving and suffering men and women and children of Afghanistan.”

The Prime Minister characterised the damage suffered as a result of al-Qaeda’s campaign as both mortal and economic, and also argued that al-Qaeda’s use of the drugs trade as a means of raising finance, including 90 per cent of the heroin sold in the UK, added a further reason for defeating it.

He also reiterated that “this is not a war with Islam”.

On 16 October 2001 Foreign Secretary Jack Straw released a document which outlined a hierarchy of objectives. This stated that the “overall objective is to eliminate terrorism as a force in international affairs.” To this end the immediate objectives were:

(a) to bring [Osama bin Laden] and other Al Qa’ida leaders to justice;

(b) to prevent [Osama bin Laden] and the Al Qa’ida network from posing a continuing terrorist threat;

(c) to this end to ensure that Afghanistan ceases to harbour and sustain international terrorism and enables us to verify that terrorist training has ceased and that the camps where terrorists train have been destroyed;

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7 Statement by Prime Minister Tony Blair, Downing Street, 7 October 2001.
8 Presidential address to the nation, 7 October 2001.
9 Defeating international terrorism: campaign objectives, Dep 01/1460, 16 October 2001.
(d) assuming that Mullah Omar will not comply with the US ultimatum we require sufficient change in the leadership to ensure that Afghanistan’s links to international terrorism are broken.

The wider objectives were:

(a) to do everything possible to eliminate the threat posed by international terrorism;

(b) to deter states from supporting, harbouring or acting complicitly with international terrorist groups;

(c) reintegration of Afghanistan as a responsible member of the international community and an end to its self-imposed isolation.

The immediate objectives were to be pursued through a range of means. These would include military action against al-Qaeda and the Taliban, and support of anti-Taliban Pashtun groups and the Northern Alliance. They would entail the maintenance of the widest possible coalition with “maximum UN support,” and the isolation of the Taliban from international support. They would include immediate steps to deal with the humanitarian problems facing Afghans, and provision of economic and political support to Afghanistan’s neighbours.

The wider objectives would include changing the climate in which terrorists operate, through strengthened domestic legislation and through cooperation within the UN, EU and G8 to deny finance to terrorists, to trace them and to bring them to justice. There would also be action against the inter-connected terrorist groups around the world, and against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. These objectives would also entail the reconstruction of Afghanistan, which would include early emergency relief, the achievement of a secure environment, and sustained efforts to move away from heroin production and domination by warlords. There would also be a need to assist the establishment of a government representative of all groups in the country.

The pursuit of the wider objectives would include “a positive political agenda of engagement with Arab countries and the Islamic world,” and “renewed efforts to resolve the conflicts which are among the underlying causes of terrorism.”

The paper stated that where states are powerless to put a stop to terrorism on their territory assistance will have to be made available. Where states are unwilling to take effective action they will face a vigorous response from the wider international community.
II Operation *Enduring Freedom*

In his address to the nation of 7 October 2001, President Bush announced the beginning of military action in Afghanistan under Operation *Enduring Freedom*. In his speech he outlined the nature and goals of the action being undertaken:

> On my orders, the United States military has begun strikes against al Qaeda terrorist training camps and military installations of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. These carefully targeted actions are designed to disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations, and to attack the military capability of the Taliban regime.

We are joined in this operation by our staunch friend, Great Britain. Other close friends, including Canada, Australia, Germany and France, have pledged forces as the operation unfolds. More than 40 countries in the Middle East, Africa, Europe and across Asia have granted air transit or landing rights. Many more have shared intelligence. We are supported by the collective will of the world.  

He added:

> By destroying camps and disrupting communications, we will make it more difficult for the terror network to train new recruits and coordinate their evil plans.

> Initially, the terrorists may burrow deeper into caves and other entrenched hiding places. Our military action is also designed to clear the way for sustained, comprehensive and relentless operations to drive them out and bring them to justice.

Soon after President Bush’s statement, Prime Minister Tony Blair gave a press conference at 10 Downing Street. He said:

> The military action we are taking will be targeted against places we know to be involved in the operation of terror or against the military apparatus of the Taliban. This military plan has been put together mindful of our determination to do all we humanly can to avoid civilian casualties.

He confirmed the participation of UK forces in the air strikes:

> As to the precise British involvement I can confirm that last Wednesday the US Government made a specific request that a number of UK military assets be used in the operation which has now begun. And I gave authority for these assets to be

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10 The White House web site, 7 October 2001 at [http://www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)
11 *ibid.*
12 10 Downing Street web site, 7 October 2001 at [http://www.number-10.gov.uk](http://www.number-10.gov.uk)
deployed. They include the base at Diego Garcia, reconnaissance and flight support aircraft and missile firing submarines. Missile firing submarines are in use tonight. The air assets will be available for use in the coming days.13

A. Military action

Operation *Enduring Freedom* has entered its fourth week of military action. The US Department of Defense (DoD) claims that the operation has so far met its key aims of severely weakening and disrupting Taliban and al-Qaeda military activity, reducing the threat to US air operations and creating the conditions for sustained anti-terrorist and humanitarian operations in Afghanistan. Taliban air defence capabilities are believed to have been damaged significantly but not fully eliminated.

At a press conference held on 29 October, the US Secretary of State for Defense, Donald Rumsfeld outlined the progress made:

Well, I would say that it depends on what your measure is. In my view, the fact that the air campaign has done a very good job of reducing down the threat from the ground -- it has not eliminated it, we know that there still are Stingers and we know there are probably still some SAMs and we know there are probably still a few MiG aircraft and some helicopters -- but in terms of being able to operate over the country, there's no question but that a good deal has been accomplished to enable us to then proceed with the second phase. And the second phase is to create the conditions for a sustained effort against al Qaeda and the Taliban.

Now, what does that mean? It means that we now are able to supply humanitarian assistance. We're now able to supply ammunition and various other supplies. We're able to get considerably better targeting information from the ground today than we had been previously. We're able to provide support to the forces that are opposing the Taliban and al Qaeda in a manner that is considerably more effective than had been the case previously when the targeting information was ether lacking or imprecise. So I would say that those who suggest what you suggested probably ought to step back and think, well, three weeks, not bad to have accomplished those things and to put in place that capability for the period ahead.14

The Secretary of State for Defence, Geoff Hoon, stated on the same day:

We have three immediate military objectives which contribute to our wider campaign: first, to deny Usama Bin Laden and the Al Qaida network the ability to train overtly in Afghanistan; second, to pressurise the Taliban regime to end its support for Usama Bin Laden and Al Qaida; and third, to set the conditions for a

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13 10 Downing Street web site, 7 October 2001 at [http://www.number-10.gov.uk](http://www.number-10.gov.uk)
subsequent military operation to maintain this pressure. We’re on track to achieve these three objectives.\textsuperscript{15}

B. US Command

US-led military action is under the operational control of General Tommy Franks, commander in chief of the Central Command (Centcom), headquartered in Tampa, Florida. General Franks is a former artillery officer and a veteran of both the Vietnam and Gulf wars.

Centcom is said to have created a ‘coalition coordination centre’ including military representatives from 12 coalition countries. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Richard B. Myers provided some details of the centre at a press briefing on 29 October:

> What they’re doing down there is coordinating those other countries that have volunteered support. And those aren’t the only countries, by the way, but they’re the ones that apply primarily to the Central Command area of responsibility. And what they’re doing down there is coordinating their contributions, and it can range all the way from a war-fighting contribution to some sort of support contribution in terms of logistics to chemical and biological units that could go forward and help protect other forces that are forward deployed in the Gulf. It’s the entire gamut. And they’re there to do that. I might add that, if you’ve seen the list, that we have several Muslim countries as well as some other allies in the region and outside the region.\textsuperscript{16}

General Franks is reportedly wary of deploying ground troops, preferring to exploit fully the air power available to the US.\textsuperscript{17} There are reports of frustration within the political command over this approach. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is said to prefer a military doctrine built around the use of Special Forces who would carry out raiding operations in Afghanistan.

The issue of the location and effectiveness of Centcom was raised with Mr Rumsfeld at a press briefing on 18 October:

**Q:** Mr. Secretary, we were told yesterday by a deputy director of operations for the Joint Staff that the aerial -- the air tasking order is still being sent back to Central Command in Florida, that the range of targets is being set there before it's being sent out to the air controllers.

And yet you have told us that you were trying to streamline the operation. And it does seem to many of us that maybe it’s cumbersome, and maybe the business of the command structure is not working. Are you going to move Central Command

\textsuperscript{16} DoD News Briefing, 29 October 2001 at http://www.defenselink.mil/news
\textsuperscript{17} The Guardian, 15 October 2001
or some authority closer to fray to have decisions made faster and closer to the scene?

**Rumsfeld:** General Myers and I have talked about that with General Franks. General Franks is comfortable where he is at the present time. He is planning at some point to possibly visit some aspects or elements of the forces in the region and some of the important people who are cooperating with us there. But at the present time, there's no chance -- there's no plan to permanently move his headquarters from Florida to the region.18

Full details of US military assets can be found in Appendix 2.

**C. Air campaign**

Between 7 and 28 October approximately 1,000 missions were launched. During that period more than 3,000 bombs and missiles were used and over 200 pre-planned target areas were selected.19 Air strikes have been conducted by a combination of carrier-based strike aircraft, land-based bombers, and *Tomahawk* cruise missiles fired from US and UK submarines and ships.

The air campaign has progressed through two main stages so far. Initial strikes focused upon airfields and air defence sites, command and control facilities and terrorist training camps. Once the Taliban’s air defences had been degraded, strikes during daylight and from lower altitudes became possible. This in turn allowed more expansive targeting. More recent attacks have targeted dispersed armour and concentrations of Taliban and al-Qaeda troops, and have been aimed at assisting Northern Alliance forces. The use of ‘bunker-buster’ munitions and cluster bombs has been confirmed. A small proportion of US munitions has gone astray causing several civilian casualties. The US has also employed Psychological Operations, which has involved the dropping of leaflets and the broadcasting of radio messages.

Land-based, long-range B1B *Lancer*, B-52 and B2 *Spirit* stealth bombers have been used during the operations. The B-52s and B1s have flown from Diego Garcia while the B2 *Spirit* stealth bombers fly round trips from the US. Fighter aircraft have included US Navy (USN) and US Marine Corps (USMC) carrier-based aircraft such as FA-18 *Hornet* and F-14 *Tomcat*.

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19 *ibid.*
The main targets have been:

Kabul - capital city’s defence ministry and airport attacked.

Jalalabad - area around this city on the border with Pakistan believed to contain a number of terrorist training camps.

Herat - city in the west of Afghanistan. Airport has been regularly hit.

Kandahar - city in southern Afghanistan and the home base of Taliban leader Mohammad Omar. Military headquarters, airport control tower and radar installations reportedly hit.

Zaranj - city on the border with Iran. Airport targeted.

Mazar-e-Sharif - Northern Alliance sources reported that explosions and fires were visible at the city's airport.

Since the beginning of military operations US military assets in the region have been supplemented by the arrival of the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk in the Mediterranean and the deployment of AC-130 Spectre gunships.

The AC-130 is a heavily armoured C-130 Hercules transport aircraft airframe, equipped with side-firing weapons integrated with sophisticated sensor, navigation and fire control systems. The USAF summarise the AC-130’s primary missions as:

- close air support, air interdiction and force protection. Missions in close air support are troops in contact, convoy escort and urban operations. Air interdiction missions are conducted against preplanned targets or targets of opportunity. Force protection missions include air base defense and facilities defense.20

The deployment of the AC-130 is the clearest indication that the US believes that it has achieved air superiority. It is slow-moving and low-flying and therefore vulnerable to ground fire. The use of the aircraft also underlined the shift of the campaign to include sustained attacks upon Taliban and al-Qaeda ground troops. Lt. General Newbold, Director of Operations, Joint Staff, outlined the AC-130’s capabilities on 16 October:

The AC-130 gunship is an excellent platform to use in this environment, for a number of reasons. Let me list a couple of them. It has precision weapons platforms, which allow us to reduce collateral damage at the impact point. It is a system with a long loiter capability, so it has the ability to station itself over a

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target area for a long period of target time. So as emerging targets appear, it’s a very useful platform.

It also has a large crew of specialist who are able to acquire targets to a degree that a fighter aircraft, for example, moving at over 300 knots, cannot. So in fact its slow speed is useful in that regard.21

1. Pattern of the bombing campaign

The pattern and level of air strikes over the past three weeks has been as follows:

Week One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of Target Areas</th>
<th>Equipment Used (approx)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07.10.2001</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25 carrier-based aircraft, 15 land-based bombers, 50 Tomahawk cruise missiles fired from US and UK submarines and ships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08.10.2001</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10-15 carrier-based aircraft, 5-8 land-based bombers, 15 Tomahawk cruise missiles fired from one US submarine and two ships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09.10.2001</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10 carrier-based aircraft, 6-8 land-based bombers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.10.2001</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12-15 carrier-based aircraft, 10 land-based bombers, 3 Tomahawk cruise missiles fired from a US submarine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.10.2001</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15 carrier-based aircraft, 10 land-based bombers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.10.2001</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15 carrier-based aircraft, 8-10 land-based bombers, 15 Tomahawk cruise missiles fired from US and UK ships and submarines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.10.2001</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15 carrier-based aircraft, 8-10 land-based bombers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DoD Press Briefings and MOD web site.22

### Week Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of Target Areas</th>
<th>Equipment Used (approx)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.10.2001</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100 carrier-based aircraft, 6-8 land-based bombers, 5 <em>Tomahawk</em> cruise missiles fired from US submarines and ships. The AC-130 gunship was deployed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.10.2001</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>85 carrier-based aircraft, 5 land-based bombers. The AC-130 gunship was deployed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.10.2001</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Carrier-based aircraft plus some F-15Es operating from ‘facilities in the region’, 8-10 land-based bombers and AC-130 gunship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.10.2001</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>75 carrier-based aircraft, less than five shore-based tactical aircraft, 10 land-based bombers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.10.2001</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>85 carrier-based aircraft, 5 land-based bombers. Two bombs dropped by a US F-14 hit a residential area in north-west Kabul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.10.2001</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>75 carrier-based aircraft, 10 land-based bombers. A laser-guided bomb dropped by an FA-18 <em>Hornet</em> hit an open area near an old people’s home in Herat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DoD Press Briefings and MOD web site.
## Week Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of Target Areas</th>
<th>Equipment Used (approx)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22.10.2001</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>60 carrier-based aircraft, 10 land-based tactical aircraft – including AC-130s, 10 long-ranged bombers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.10.2001</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>75 carrier-based aircraft, 10 long-ranged bombers, 5 land-based tactical aircraft – including AC-130s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.10.2001</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>65 carrier-based aircraft, around 5 long-ranged bombers, 6-10 land-based tactical aircraft – including AC-130s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.10.2001</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>70 carrier-based aircraft, around 4 long-ranged bombers, 4-6 land-based tactical aircraft – including AC-130s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.10.2001</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.10.2001</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.10.2001</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>55 carrier-based aircraft, around 4 long-ranged bombers, 4-6 land-based tactical aircraft.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DoD Press Briefings and MOD web site.

## 2. Targeting

The question of how targeting decisions are made has been raised on several occasions at DoD press briefings, particularly in relation to the stated desire to minimise civilian casualties. Interest has centred on attacks against ‘targets of opportunity’, i.e. targets that appear on the battlefield, rather than ones that are identified in advance. US strike aircraft are operating in designated ‘engagement zones’ in which they are given general types of targets, such as moving military vehicles, and can get rapid approval to hit specific emerging targets from ‘forward air controllers’ (FACs) flying in surveillance aircraft or operating on the ground.

Rear Admiral John D Stufflebeem, Deputy Director of Operations for Current Readiness and Capabilities, Joint Staff, gave an account of how targeting decisions are being made during Operation *Enduring Freedom*:
A pilot of a strike aircraft who is given a mission in an engagement zone knows what type of targets he’ll go against. He knows he’ll be going against mobile armour or mobile surface-to-air capability. There will be a forward air controller who will find those targets and pass those targets to those pilots to attack.

So the sense that there is any freewheeling or any self-determination is really not correct. Those target types have already been predetermined. If they are in that engagement zone, and when they can be found and positively identified, they will be attacked.23

He explained the concept of ‘flex-targeting’:

We’re using power in ways today that we had never thought before. For instance, bombers that go to a target, come back to a tanker, and are sent to another target. That’s flex-targeting. That’s using bombers in a way that we hadn’t previously done – that flexibility that this environment breeds.24

On 8 October, General Myers emphasised the increased use of precision-guided munitions compared to previous conflicts:

Probably the most significant capability that's been added since the Gulf War -- there are two points. One is, we have a lot more of them. If you remember in the Gulf War, about 10 percent of our munitions were what we call precision-guided munitions. In Operation Allied Force, about 90 percent of our munitions were guided munitions. So we have more of them. And the other thing we have are our joint direct attack munition, which is a Global Positioning System, the satellite system that provides accurate positioning to the weapon, so we can drop in all weather conditions without actually seeing the ground. That's a huge difference from previous conflicts.25

At a DoD press briefing on 11 October, Mr Rumsfeld was questioned about dangers of civilian casualties when bombing populated areas like Kabul:

The munitions that are being used tend to be very precise. They are not 100 percent. Everyone here knows that, that there is no -- an automobile doesn't work 100 percent of the time the way one would want it, nor does any other piece of equipment, including equipment that's managed by the Department of Defense.26

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24 ibid.
25 ibid., 8 October 2001
26 ibid., 11 October 2001
3. Cluster bombs

The use of cluster bombs is of particular relevance to the question of targeting. US forces are using cluster bombs against Taliban and al-Qaeda armoured vehicles and concentrations of infantry forces. The heaviest use of such munitions has been north of Kabul where Taliban forces are dug in against the opposition Northern Alliance.

Cluster bombs were used widely during NATO’s Operation Allied Force in Kosovo in 1999, and attracted considerable controversy because a proportion of the bomb’s submunitions (bomblets) regularly failed to detonate when deployed. This left unexploded bomblets or grenades scattered over a large area. A high proportion of these bomblets remain live and are liable to explode if touched. The submunitions have caused a number of post-conflict civilian injuries. Several pressure groups have called for the halting of the use of cluster bombs and have likened the risk to civilians from unexploded bomblets to that posed by landmines.

During the Kosovo campaign the RAF used a total of 531 RBL 755 cluster munitions, which represented 52.5 per cent of all the munitions deployed. The MOD has estimated that the failure rate for the RBL 755 bomb is around 5 per cent. The bomb contains 147 bomblets, which would mean that on average around 7 bomblets would fail to explode per bomb. In total throughout the whole campaign approximately 3,717 RAF bomblets failed to detonate. In June 1999 two soldiers with the Royal Gurkha Rifles were killed while trying to clear school classrooms of cluster bombs, shortly after NATO troops entered Kosovo.

On 25 October General Richard B. Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated that the US has used cluster munitions only “when they are the most effective weapon for the intended target. There have not been a great number of them used, but they have been used”.

On 26 October the Armed Forces Minister, Adam Ingram, defended the use of cluster bombs during the current campaign:

On cluster bombs, I remind the House that this is a military campaign. Cluster bombs are part of the targeting approach being adopted by the coalition forces. The United States is dropping material that contains submunitions. They are targeted specifically: the particular weapons being used are optimised for use

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27 There are two main types of cluster bomb, those delivered by surface artillery or rockets and those delivered by air. The bombs are designed to spread a large number of submunitions (often referred to as grenades in ground-delivered weapons and bomblets in air-delivered weapons) over a large area. The submunitions are be activated by an internal fuse, and, depending on the type of weapon, can detonate above ground, at impact, or in a delayed mode.
28 HL Deb 9 April 2001, c145w
29 HC Deb 9 February 2000, c161w
against armour and vehicles, usually in very concentrated numbers. That is the purpose. There is a threat on the ground, and that is how it has been judged best to tackle that.\textsuperscript{31}

On the question of the legality of cluster bombs, the Secretary of State for Defence, Geoff Hoon stated on 29 October that:

Cluster bombs are in no way comparable with land mines. They are not defined as land mines in any international agreement and their use is wholly lawful. Unless and until there is a better means of dealing with the threat posed by armoured vehicles, the UK and the US will continue to use them.\textsuperscript{32}

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has recommended that the use of cluster bombs should be suspended until an international agreement on their use and clearance has been achieved.\textsuperscript{33} General Sir Hugh Beach, former Master General of the Ordnance, concluded in his study ‘Cluster bombs: a case for banning?’, of February 2000, that, while a case could be made for an outright ban, he believed that an immediate ban was inappropriate due to their proven utility and limited scale of use when compared to land mines.

\section*{D. Land operations}

At a news briefing on 20 October General Myers announced that US Special Operations Forces, including Army Rangers, had been deployed in Afghanistan the night before. He showed video clips, including night-vision imagery, of the night’s operation. The forces were parachuted into southern Afghanistan from C-130 aircraft and were said to have attacked and destroyed “targets associated with terrorist activity [an airfield 60 miles southwest of Kandahar] and Taliban command and control”.\textsuperscript{34} The mission was described as being successful with all objectives having been accomplished.

No similar raids have been reported since. Rear Admiral Stufflebeem commented on the status of Special Forces Operations at a DoD press conference on 26 October:

…there are times when we’ll do things invisibly and keep them invisible, and there are times when we’ll release the information that comes. I think the best way to leave that is that we have a campaign that has a number of objectives, and we have a time line for a number of these objectives.\textsuperscript{35}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{31} HC Deb 26 October 2001, c554  \\
\textsuperscript{32} HC Deb 29 October 2001, c623  \\
\textsuperscript{33} ‘Cluster bombs: a case for banning?’, General Sir Hugh Beach, ISIS Centre for Defence Studies, \textit{Briefing Paper No 79}, February 2001.  \\
\textsuperscript{34} DoD News Briefing, 20 October 2001 at \url{http://www.defenselink.mil/news}  \\
\textsuperscript{35} ibid., 26 October 2001
\end{flushright}
There has been much speculation that the deployment of ground forces on 19 October represented a ‘second phase’ to the military campaign, and that a greater reliance upon ground forces would follow. General Myers has cautioned against interpreting military action under Operation Enduring Freedom in the same way as more conventional military actions such as the Gulf War:

This is not a linear war; this is not a sequential war. To think about this in terms of phases, as we have other conflicts -- we've just got to clear our minds of that. We are fighting an enemy that uses asymmetric means, so we're going to use all means available to us -- some asymmetric, some very conventional. You saw that today on the clips.

We have a notion of things we would like to happen, but it’s not in the sequential sense or this linear sense that our brains tend to work in. We’ve been working this very hard, ourselves, to accommodate our thinking so we can be agile, more flexible in our responses. This is tough work, but don’t think about it in terms of phasing -- in “once we’re done with the bombing campaign, now it's the ground campaign” -- that is not how this is going to go.36

On 30 October the Pentagon confirmed that a “very modest” number of US ground troops are serving in Afghanistan in a liaison and targeting role with the Northern Alliance. Mr Rumsfeld stated at a press briefing:

We do have some military people on the ground. They -- they're in the north, and we’ve had others on the ground who have come in and out on the south. But the ones that are there are doing exactly what I said; they are military -- uniformed military personnel who are assisting with re-supply, assisting with communications liaison, assisting with targeting and providing the kind of very specific information which is helpful to the air effort. And because they are there now, the effort has improved in its effectiveness over what had been the case previously.37

Mr Hoon, who was at the same press briefing, stated that the UK does not have ground troops in any significant numbers in Afghanistan at the present time.

E. Taliban and al-Qaeda forces

Taliban forces are estimated to total between 35,000 and 40,000 troops, with around 3,000 Arab fighters under the command of Osama bin Laden. A key aim of early attacks has been to remove any air threat to UK and US forces. Although Taliban forces do not have sophisticated military equipment, they are believed to have inherited US Stinger missiles (the DoD estimates 200-300 missiles) and a range of Russian surface to air and

37 ibid., 31 October 2001
Scud missiles. They also have a small number of Soviet-era fighter aircraft, although there are doubts as to whether much of this equipment is still serviceable.

Rear Admiral Stufflebeem provided this assessment of the Taliban forces:

They are proven to be tough warriors. We’re in an environment they, obviously, are experts in, and it is extremely harsh. I am a bit surprised at how doggedly they’re hanging on to their power. I think that’s the way to put it. For Mullah Omar to not see the inevitability of what will happen surprises me. But we are prepared to take however long is required to bring the Taliban down.³⁸

Mr Rumsfeld gave his impressions of the level of resistance the Taliban and al-Qaeda forces might continue to provide:

…They still have a lot of very seasoned tough people. Anyone who has ever watched the history of that country, or the effort that the Soviet Union made to conquer the country has to know that these people who have spent many, many years fighting, and they live in caves, and they are perfectly capable of fighting a very tough fight.³⁹

Further details of the Taliban, al-Qaeda and Northern Alliance forces can be found in Section III A below.

F. UK involvement – Operation Veritas

The UK is so far believed to be the only country other than the US to have participated directly in military action in Afghanistan. UK submarines have fired Tomahawk cruise missiles into Afghanistan on two occasions and it is widely assumed that British Special Forces are operating in country.

The UK has also played a supporting role by making the air base at Diego Garcia available for long-range bombing runs by B-52 and B1B Lancer aircraft,⁴⁰ and carrying out daily air-to-air refuelling and reconnaissance operations. RAF Tristar and VC-10 tanker aircraft have been deployed from RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire to support the operation.⁴¹ Their refuelling system is compatible with US Navy (USN) and Marine Corps (MC) aircraft, allowing them to support US carrier-borne assets. Other aircraft involved in the operation include the Airborne Early Warning (AEW) E3-D Sentry surveillance aircraft, the Nimrod R1 surveillance aircraft, and the Canberra PR9 reconnaissance aircraft.

³⁹ Secretary Rumsfield interview with Wolf Blitzer, CNN, 28 October 2001 at http://www.defenselink.mil/cgi-bin/dlprint.cgi
⁴¹ MOD web site at http://news.mod.uk/veritas/tlam.htm
There has been speculation as to which elements of the large tri-service force involved in the *Saif Sareea II* training exercise in Oman would remain in theatre in order to contribute to Operation *Veritas*. This speculation was answered on 26 October 2001, when Mr Ingram provided the following details of UK forces:

> Our current forces are primarily configured to assist in the coalition's air campaign. That campaign will continue and develop over time and so must the capabilities that we assign to it. We have therefore decided to create a large and rebalanced force in the region...What I can do is describe the forces that we will reassign to Operation Veritas from Exercise Saif Sareea 2 when the exercise finishes next week.

Those forces will comprise the following: the aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious, which will be re-equipped for helicopter operations; the assault ship HMS Fearless; a submarine presence able to launch Tomahawk missiles; the destroyer HMS Southampton; the frigate HMS Cornwall; seven Royal Fleet Auxiliaries—the RFAs Sir Tristram, Sir Percivale, Fort Victoria, Fort Rosalie, Bayleaf, Brambleleaf and Diligence; and four additional support aircraft consisting of Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft and Hercules transport planes.

In addition, some 200 men of 40 Commando Royal Marines, based in Taunton, will be aboard HMS Fearless as the lead elements of an immediately available force to help support operations. The remainder of 40 Commando--about 400 men--will return to the United Kingdom, but will be held at a high readiness to return to the theatre should our operational needs make that necessary. That arrangement will also permit us to rotate companies aboard ship and so guarantee that the whole Commando remains fresh and fully prepared for operations. That powerful force totals some 4,200 personnel in theatre. It represents a major enhancement of the coalition's capabilities.42

The naval task force is under the overall control of Rear-Admiral James Burnell-Nugent who had previously been commanding the maritime element of Operation Saif Sareea.

Further details of these forces can be found at Appendix 3.

*3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines*

3 Commando Brigade is the Royal Navy’s amphibious infantry. It is on permanent readiness to deploy around the world and represents a core component of the UK’s Joint Rapid Reaction Force. The brigade is divided into three battalion-sized units of infantry soldiers. These are 40 Commando based in Taunton, 42 Commando in Plymouth and 45 Commando in Arbroath. The Royal Marines are particularly proficient in small unit and stealth tactics against heavily defended targets. According to the MOD the brigade

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42 HC Deb 26 October 2001, c550
represents “a highly mobile, self sustained and versatile organisation, with a strategic power projection capability that is unique among the British armed forces”.\textsuperscript{43}

The marines also represent the UK’s specialist mountain and winter warfare troops. On a visit to Oman on 27 October, Mr Hoon praised the marines, saying that their expertise would be crucial in the attempts to find Mr bin Laden:

They [the marines] have got a range of specialist capabilities and some of the strikes from the air have been against caves. We assume that a number of the hiding places of Osama bin Laden employs are in the ground and that capability would be enormously important...The means to take people out of caves involves a lot of brave people attacking what can be a very well defended position.\textsuperscript{44}

The commanding officer of 3 Commando Brigade, Brigadier Roger Lane, was reported on 29 October as expressing concern regarding the readiness of the marines for military action. According to the BBC, he stressed that the troops should not be rushed into action and that there was a lack of good intelligence information in the region. At Defence Questions later the same day, Bernard Jenkin, the Opposition defence spokesman, highlighted “the mixed messages that have been causing serious concern about the direction of the campaign in recent days”.\textsuperscript{45}

The Defence Secretary denied that there had been mixed messages, and argued that the Brigadier’s comments had been taken out of context and that he had been referring to “the importance for any military operation of having members of the armed forces prepared for that specific operation”.\textsuperscript{46}

Another question that has been raised regarding the UK deployment has been the decision to keep HMS Fearless on station and return HMS Ocean to the UK for a refit. HMS Ocean with its greater helicopter capacity might appear to be a vessel better suited to supporting the Royal Marines. According to the MOD the ship’s primary role is to “carry an Embarked Military Force (EMF) supported by 12 medium support helicopters, 6 attack helicopters and 4 Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel (LCVP) Mk 5 Landing Craft”.\textsuperscript{47} The issue of HMS Ocean was raised by Mike Hancock at Defence Questions on 29 October:

\textbf{Mr. Mike Hancock:} Given that we are at the forefront of our share of the campaign, will the Secretary of State confirm the role of the Royal Marines? Why was it decided to keep HMS Fearless, not HMS Ocean, on post? Will he confirm that technical or mechanical problems are not related to the return of HMS Ocean to the United Kingdom?

\textsuperscript{43} Royal Navy web site at http://www.royal-navy.mod.uk
\textsuperscript{44} BBC web site at http://www.bbc.co.uk/news
\textsuperscript{45} HC Deb 29 October 2001, c614.
\textsuperscript{46} ibid.
\textsuperscript{47} Royal Navy web site at http://www.royal-navy.mod.uk/static/pages/1998.html
Mr. Hoon: HMS Ocean does not face the mechanical difficulties to which the hon. Gentleman refers. There is a routine programme of maintenance. The decision on which ship should remain in and around the theatre wholly reflected both existing plans and the need to ensure rotation of available equipment and the crews responsible for that equipment. It is necessary to take decisions for the longer term, not simply to decide which ship should remain. Had we chosen to place HMS Ocean rather than HMS Fearless on station, the hon. Gentleman could have asked the same question the other way round. HMS Ocean will play its part in the campaign in due course.48

G. NATO contribution

On 4 October, following the decision to invoke Article 5 of the Washington Treaty in the wake of the 11 September attacks, the NATO Allies agreed at the request of the United States to take eight measures, individually and collectively, to expand the options available in the campaign against terrorism. Specifically, they agreed to:

- enhance intelligence sharing and co-operation, both bilaterally and in the appropriate NATO bodies, relating to the threats posed by terrorism and the actions to be taken against it;
- provide, individually or collectively, as appropriate and according to their capabilities, assistance to Allies and other states which are or may be subject to increased terrorist threats as a result of their support for the campaign against terrorism;
- take necessary measures to provide increased security for facilities of the United States and other Allies on their territory;
- backfill selected Allied assets in NATO’s area of responsibility that are required directly to support operations against terrorism;
- provide blanket overflight clearances for the United States and other Allies’ aircraft, in accordance with the necessary air traffic arrangements and national procedures, for military flights related to operations against terrorism;
- provide access for the United States and other Allies to ports and airfields on the territory of NATO nations for operations against terrorism, including for refuelling, in accordance with national procedures.

These actions effectively made Article 5 of the Washington Treaty operational, following the confirmation that the 11 September attack was directed from abroad.

48 HC Deb 29 October 2001, c623
On 8 October NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson outlined the practical steps that NATO had taken to assist the military operation:

In this context and following a specific request from the United States, the Allies today agreed that five NATO AWACS [Airborne Warning and Control Systems] aircraft, together with their crews, will deploy to the United States to assist with counter-terrorism operations. This deployment, which was agreed by acclamation this morning, will allow US aircraft currently engaged in these operations in the United States to be released for operations against terrorism elsewhere. 49

Supreme Allied Commander Europe, US Air Force General Joseph Ralston, commented on the deployment: “This is a historic decision in that it is the first time NATO assets will have been used in direct support of the continental United States”.50 Lord Robertson also welcomed a French offer to supply AWACS to cover Bosnia in order to release further US aircraft.

On 9 October NATO announced that its Standing Naval Force Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED) would deploy to the Eastern Mediterranean. According to a NATO press release, this deployment will “provide NATO presence in the area while demonstrating NATO’s resolve and solidarity”.51 The NATO web site provides the following details of STANAVFORMED:

STANAVFORMED is part of NATO’s immediate reaction forces. Its primary mission is to be able to deploy rapidly to an area of tension or crisis. It also forms the nucleus around which to build a more versatile and powerful naval force, whenever required.

STANAVFORMED currently is comprised of: HMS Chatham, Frigate, UK (Flagship); FGS Bayern, Frigate, Germany; HS Formion, Destroyer, Greece; ITS Aliseo, Frigate, Italy; HNLMS Van Nes, Frigate, The Netherlands; SPS Santa Maria, Frigate, Spain; TCG Giresun, Frigate, Turkey; USS Elrod, Frigate, US; FGS Rhoen, Auxiliary Oiler, Germany.52

*Jane’s Defence Weekly* reports that, despite the robust response by NATO, the contributions reflect traditional NATO rivalries. A NATO official was reported as saying, “The UK is getting the spotlight … the paradox is that France and Germany are clamouring to get in. They are followed closely by Spain and Italy”.53

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50 *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, 17 October 2001
52 *ibid.*
53 *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, 17 October 2001
H. Other military contributions

According to Mr Hoon, direct military assistance is being offered to the US by Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Jordan, the Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Spain, Turkey and Ukraine.54

A full breakdown of foreign military and intelligence contributions to the current campaign can be found in the Congressional Research Service document *Operation Enduring Freedom: Foreign Pledges of Military & Intelligence Support*, October 17, 2001.55

Two key military contributors are Australia and Canada.

a. Australia

On 16 October Prime Minister John Howard announced the Australian commitment to Operation *Enduring Freedom*. This was in response to a request by President Bush on 15 October for Australia to activate the commitment that it had made to join the coalition force.

The following ADF elements will be deployed overseas:

- Two P3-C long-range maritime patrol aircraft to augment coalition maritime patrol and reconnaissance capabilities;
- An Australian special forces detachment to go to selected locations as decided by the CDF in conjunction with coalition force commanders to conduct combined operations;
- Two B707 tanker aircraft to support air-to-air refuelling operations;
- A naval task group comprising one amphibious command ship with organic helicopter support and frigate escort;
- Four F/A-18s to provide support for the air defence of coalition forces;
- One frigate with embarked helicopter capability to assist in the coalition’s naval protection of shipping effort; and
- Elements of 16AD Regt deployed as part of the Australian maritime force.

Mr Howard said the total number of deployed personnel would be about 1,550 when all Australian forces had been committed and that he expected that the bulk of the ADF commitment would be deployed by the middle of November.56 *Jane’s Defence Weekly* has reported that these forces will be under direct Australian command in theatre.

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54 HC Deb 29 October 2001, c622
b. Canada

On 8 October 2001 Art Eggleton, the Canadian Minister of National Defence, outlined the extent of the country’s participation, which has been codenamed Operation Apollo. Canada is committing one-third of its major warships, six aircraft and part of its counter-terrorist ‘Joint Task Force 2’ (JTF2) unit. More than 2,000 members of the Canadian Forces will be part of the coalition.

Specifically, Canada will provide:

- The Canadian Patrol Frigate, HMCS Halifax, currently with NATO’s Standing Naval Force Atlantic (STANAVFORLANT) with 230 personnel, will be directed to the Persian Gulf immediately.
- A Canadian Naval Task Group, with over 1,000 personnel serving aboard two frigates, including the Halifax, plus a destroyer, a supply ship and Sea King helicopters, will proceed to the Persian Gulf from Halifax.
- An additional frigate from the West Coast, HMCS Vancouver, will join a US Carrier Battle Group.
- The Air Force will deploy both surveillance and transport aircraft, including three Hercules, one Airbus and two Aurora maritime patrol aircraft.
- Humanitarian assistance will be provided to the Afghan people. 57

The Canadian ships are capable of integrating seamlessly into a USN carrier battle group, having done so regularly for the past four years. 58 The JTF2 was originally established in 1993 as a domestic counter-terrorist unit but its remit has broadened over the years to include activities outside Canada. Missions have included deep reconnaissance missions in Somalia and Yugoslavia. The government is reportedly considering doubling the size of JTF2, which currently numbers 250 to 350 personnel.

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57 Canadian Department of Defence web site at http://www.dnd.ca/menu/Operations/Apollo/index_e.htm
III Afghanistan

A. Developments on the ground

The Taliban leadership called an emergency cabinet meeting on 8 October at which it was agreed to “forcefully resist” the US-led military campaign. The movement’s ambassador in Pakistan, Abdul Salam Zaeef, declared: “This action is not only against the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan but this is a terrorist attack on the whole Muslim world.”\(^{59}\)

Some of the initial air strikes were directed against the Taliban’s relatively basic governing and military infrastructure, as well as against suspected terrorist bases. Taliban forces are believed to number between 35,000 and 40,000, with a sizeable foreign contingent (between 8,000 and 12,000) drawn from Pakistan, and from Arab and Central Asian states. Around 2,000-3,000 of these foreign fighters are believed to be under the direct control of Mr bin Laden, who is characterised by some commentators as the Taliban’s de facto minister of defence.\(^{60}\) In contrast to many within the Taliban’s ranks, Mr bin Laden’s contingent is both highly motivated and well trained and equipped, making it a key element within the Taliban order of battle. This dependence highlights the growing level of integration between the al-Qaeda network and the core Taliban leadership in recent years, making it increasingly difficult to draw a meaningful distinction between the two.

1. Taliban Deployments

As of 30 October over half the Taliban’s combat power remains deployed on the northern fronts around Mazar-e-Sharif and north of Kabul to counter the opposition Northern Alliance (or United Front). Most of these troops are deployed within relatively conventional, albeit loose, unit structures, with logistical support and some heavy artillery and armour.

The threat of an Alliance offensive initially forced the Taliban to keep its troops in relatively large concentrations, although this rendered them more vulnerable to air attack. However, reports from the front around 23 October suggested Taliban troops were dispersing. The United Nations reported that some units were moving back into Kabul and other populated areas. Dispersal was used to good effect by Serbian and Yugoslav forces during the NATO bombing campaign in Kosovo, although those forces were engaged primarily in counter-insurgency operations against the KLA rather than the conventional conflict that the Taliban are currently fighting against the Northern Alliance. Dispersal of forces and of heavy weaponry would render the Taliban less able to counter a major Northern Alliance offensive.

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59 The Guardian, 9 October 2001. The designation ‘Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan’ has been adopted by the Taliban, but is not recognised internationally.

60 The detailed background on the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, and his loose al-Qaeda network of militant Islamist groups is given in Section III of Library Research Paper 01/72.
Northern Alliance commanders reported around the same time that Taliban troops were moving their defensive positions closer to the Alliance frontline, making them harder to target and increasing the risk of ‘friendly fire’ from US planes against Alliance positions. There were reports on 23 October that US planes had struck Alliance-controlled territory in error. The Pentagon could not confirm the claims, although US military officials acknowledged that it was a “tight line” between the two sides. On 27 October US bombs mistakenly hit the hamlet of Ghani Kheil on the Northern Alliance side of the frontline, killing one and injuring 10. The Alliance foreign minister, Abdullah Abdullah, declared the incident to be a tragic error, and called for an intensification of air strikes against Taliban frontline positions.61

2. Northern Alliance Deployments

The task of carrying out air strikes on Taliban forward positions would be made considerably more complex were there to be a fluid frontline. A major offensive by the Northern Alliance against Kabul would increase the risk of US ‘friendly fire’ hitting advancing Alliance forces. The Pentagon acknowledged on 30 October that some 100 US military officials had been deployed with Alliance commanders and troops to act as liaison. It would require much closer co-ordination and extensive forward air control provisions to ensure US air power could be brought to bear accurately in support of a major Alliance offensive.

In any event, there are doubts, both politically and militarily, about the Alliance’s ability to capture either the capital or Mazar-e-Sharif. The Alliance is drawn predominantly from the Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara ethnic groups that populate northern and central Afghanistan. It enjoys little support outside these areas and is viewed with suspicion and outright hostility in the Pashtun south and east, from where the Taliban has traditionally drawn its support. As a result, the United States, under pressure from Pakistan, has indicated its desire for the Alliance to desist from a premature advance on Kabul. Ahmed Rashid, a leading commentator on Afghanistan, wrote on 24 October:

Any premature attack on Kabul would have further alienated the Pathans [Pashtuns], prevented defections and rallied moderate Pathans around the Taliban, which is already shifting from a holy war-inspired to a nationalist rhetoric, calling upon all Afghans to defend the country against the American invaders.62

There is a fear that, were Northern Alliance forces to enter Kabul or other densely populated areas, heavy civilian casualties could result. Some commentators have warned that the US could become tarnished by association if atrocities were committed by Alliance forces.

61 Daily Telegraph, 29 October 2001
By contrast there is deep suspicion of Pakistan within the Northern Alliance. One commander is reported as believing that

Islamabad persuaded Washington to refrain from bombing the Taliban front as a ploy to prevent [the Alliance] advancing on Kabul and playing any meaningful political role in a post-Taliban Afghanistan.63

The Alliance continues to be faced with significant military obstacles. Prior to 11 September, its forces were on the defensive, squeezed into a narrow pocket of territory in the north-east of the country. Internal divisions and poor internal communications make it difficult for Alliance commanders to co-ordinate operations effectively. The loss of its top military commander, Ahmed Shah Masud, who was killed in a suicide bomb attack in early September, dealt a serious blow to Alliance cohesion.

The Alliance has little heavy weaponry, is numerically inferior to the Taliban and is hampered by poor logistics and tortuous supply lines. Some new equipment has started arriving from Russia and Central Asia, but it will be some time before this can become fully effective. On 29 October the Pentagon said it had begun some limited airdrops of munitions to Alliance forces to help ease some of the logistical difficulties.

Around Mazar-e-Sharif, US air power has had some impact on the large Taliban garrison, believed to number over 10,000, yet the outnumbered Alliance troops of General Rashid Dostum continue to be held back by a shortage of supplies and heavy weaponry. Thus far, efforts by another Alliance commander, Ismail Khan, to cut the Taliban’s supply routes to Mazar-e-Sharif by seizing the north-western town of Qala-e-Nau have also failed.

Some Alliance commanders have expressed frustration at the sporadic nature of US air strikes along the frontline, arguing that significant air support was required to redress their numerical inferiority. The Alliance foreign minister, Abdullah Abdullah, declared on 25 October that:

So far the pressure on the Taliban is not such that we should expect them to be demoralised, to lay down their arms and run away… I can understand some of the frustrations among the commanders.64

3. Civilian Casualties

There are concerns that a prolonged bombing campaign that causes heavy civilian casualties could turn broader Afghan opinion against the West and increase support for the Taliban. The bombing is already provoking disquiet among sections of the Afghan population, including among elements of the Northern Alliance that resent the

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64 *Financial Times*, 29 October 2001
intervention of foreign forces into their country. The head of security in the Alliance’s provisional capital of Faizabad, Sebghatullah Saiq, has called for an immediate halt to the bombing of towns, arguing that “It will unite people against America.” An Alliance commander in Argun, Abdul Mussadiq, declared that “Americans believe they are targeting the Taliban and their so-called guests, but the television pictures show that the main victims are civilians.” In a bid to capitalise on potential discontent, the Taliban intelligence chief, Qari Ahmadullah, called in mid-October on all Afghans to unite around his movement, saying “We will forget the past problems with those people who join us, because now it is the question of our religion and country.”

The Pentagon has acknowledged that some weapons have malfunctioned and gone astray, hitting civilian areas. However, it has insisted that the intended targets were purely military and that the number of such incidents has been proportionally very low. On the second night of the US-led campaign, a UN-affiliated demining agency in Kabul was struck by a missile and four security staff were killed. A UN spokesperson warned that: “People need to distinguish between combatants and those innocent civilians who do not bear arms.” In late October a Red Cross warehouse housing tents and equipment was struck twice and much of the stored equipment was destroyed. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) insisted the building had been clearly identified with a red cross on the roof, declaring that “attacking or occupying facilities marked with the red cross emblem constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law.” Some reports suggest Taliban fighters have begun taking refuge on aid agency property in an attempt to escape the bombing.

An unknown number of civilians have died in heavy air strikes in and around Kabul and the other main Taliban-controlled towns of Kandahar, Jalalabad and Herat. Taliban sources have made daily claims that the US-led campaign is causing tens or even hundreds of civilian casualties, although precise numbers have been impossible to establish, due to the difficulties in obtaining independent verification. US and British officials argue that the Taliban routinely exaggerates these figures. Since mid-October a few foreign journalists have been operating in the country alongside the Qatari al-Jazeera satellite news channel and have been given restricted access to some of the alleged bomb sites.

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65 *The Economist*, 27 October 2001
66 ibid.
67 *Daily Telegraph*, 17 October 2001
68 IWPR’s *Reporting Central Asia*, No.73, Part II, 10 October 2001
69 ICRC Press Release 01/48, 26 October 2001
70 See for example, *Financial Times*, 17 October 2001
71 See various *BBC Summary of World Broadcast: Asia-Pacific* reports.
4. **Efforts to Undermine the Taliban**

Military analysts believe massive US bombing of Taliban frontline positions, perhaps involving B-52 heavy bombers, could undermine Taliban morale and encourage more defections. As of late October, however, the US approach appears more inclined towards bringing about the collapse of the Taliban through other diplomatic and military means.

On the frontline north of Kabul, the US is reported to be targeting its firepower not against Afghan Taliban units, but rather against the foreign contingent concentrated in the notorious Brigade 055, which is tied to Mr bin Laden. The use of targeted air strikes on non-Afghan Taliban positions is apparently aimed at provoking a rift between the Taliban and its foreign allies and at encouraging Afghan Taliban fighters to defect. Ahmed Rashid wrote on 20 September that:

> The hardcore fighters in the 35,000 to 40,000-strong Taliban army and many of the 3,000 Arab fighters under Osama bin Laden’s command will follow the Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar’s orders to fight to the death.

> But many are likely to desert and go home. Since its inception seven years ago, the Taliban has been a movement rather than a political party.

> They have expanded their support by absorbing coercing and bribing local warlords who could defect once the Taliban’s grip on power is weakened.

John Simpson, the BBC World Affairs Editor, commented on the day the air campaign began that:

> … most of the personnel are supplied by allies of the Taleban. These are people who supported the Taleban simply because they thought in 1996 that the Taleban had the power to take over most of the country. But these are fair-weather friends, and most of them will be thinking this is a battle they cannot win.

In addition, evidence has emerged in recent years of growing discontent among some Taliban elements over the presence of Mr bin Laden and his militant Islamist fighters. Ahmed Rashid commented on 20 September that:

> Many tribal leaders feel left out as Mullah Omar has abandoned his tribal councils and a decision-making process, which included everyone from tribal chiefs to traders and military commanders, for a tiny cabal that advises him and runs the government.

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72 Brigade 055 is widely suspected of involvement in a number of atrocities committed against northern forces and civilians in Mazar-e-Sharif and Bamiyan. See Michael Griffin, ‘The Taleban Response’, *IWPR’s Reporting Central Asia*, No.73, Part I, 8 October 2001

73 *Daily Telegraph*, 20 September 2001

This cabal is made up of hardline Pathans [Pashtuns] from the religious police, some Islamic judges and army commanders, and foreigners such as Arab and Pakistani extremists who care little for the tribulations of the Afghan people.

Most ministers in Kabul have become increasingly frustrated as bin Laden’s influence over Mullah Omar has grown.\textsuperscript{75}

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), US Special Forces and Afghan opposition leaders are reported to have established contact with regional commanders, who are currently allied to the Taliban, but outside its leadership circle, in an attempt to persuade them to switch sides. Without the support of certain key groups, the Taliban’s control over the country would be severely weakened and its manpower significantly depleted.

The current Taliban deployment leaves few troops for security in the rear areas to combat incursions by US or British forces. The first US ground assault on Kandahar in mid-October apparently encountered little organised opposition, although some of Mr bin Laden’s fighters have reportedly since been moved to key locations around the country. Any major redeployment of Taliban units from the northern frontlines would be vulnerable to US air interdiction and would weaken the Taliban’s ability to hold the Northern Alliance. The halting of cross-border fuel supplies by Pakistan and Iran could also impact on the Taliban’s mobility.\textsuperscript{76}

In spite of predictions of rifts within the Taliban, many Afghans remain deeply suspicious of the predominantly Uzbek, Tajik and Hazara Northern Alliance. The Pakistani Foreign Minister, Abdul Sattar, commented in an interview with the Financial Times on 27 October that: “If a credible political alternative emerges on the horizon, then the commanders may themselves begin to think about changing sides.”\textsuperscript{77} The exact nature of a future political arrangement, and the role available within it for Pashtun representatives, may therefore carry weight in the calculations of less committed Taliban members.

The process of building a coherent alternative to the Taliban received a serious setback on 26 October with the capture and execution by the Taliban of Abdul Haq, a former Mujaheddin commander who had entered Afghanistan to establish contact with potentially wavering elements of the Taliban. Reports suggest Mr Haq and his group of fighters were ambushed near Kabul by Taliban units, which had been monitoring his movements. Efforts by US forces to prevent Mr Haq’s capture failed.

Commentators are divided on what will happen in the coming weeks and months. Hedayat Amin-Arsala, a special envoy for the former king, Mohammed Zahir Shah, believes the Taliban could collapse “like a house of cards” once a clear political

\textsuperscript{75} ‘Tribal mix is the key, not military might in Afghanistan’, Daily Telegraph, 20 September 2001
\textsuperscript{76} See Michael Griffin, ‘The Taleban Response’, IWPR’s Reporting Central Asia, No.73, Part I, 8 October 2001
\textsuperscript{77} Financial Times, 29 October 2001
alternative is in place. Others believe the Taliban’s authority may erode gradually over time, allowing anti-Taliban forces to gain control of the country region by region. The Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short, commented on 18 October that:

I imagine a set of virtual dominos, with area after area where it becomes safer to move and relief agencies start moving in and a new government extends its control. […]

It’s not conceivable that the Taliban falls and a new government moves in immediately. We have to envisage a crumbling of the Taliban and some part of the country becoming peaceful and that growing and growing.  

B. Future political options for Afghanistan

In the short term there are concerns that a power vacuum could develop in the event of a loosening of Taliban power. This could open the way for local commanders to seize control, a situation that would make efforts to restore order and some form of centralised administration extremely difficult.

Therefore, significant diplomatic effort has been devoted to reconciling the rival interests that divide Afghan society. The UN Secretary-General has appointed Lakhdar Brahimi, a highly-respected Algerian diplomat, to the post of special envoy to Afghanistan. Mr Brahimi has been engaged in consultations with Afghan political and tribal leaders and the international community in an attempt to co-ordinate the formation of a coalition transitional administration.

The key phrase that has emerged in this context is the need for a ‘broad-based government’ that reflects the various ethnic, political and religious factors within Afghan society and the extensive exile community. The task is widely recognised as extremely challenging, given the legacy of over two decades of Soviet occupation and civil conflict.

Ethnically, the country is a patchwork of disparate groups. Pashtuns (or Pathans) form the largest ethnic contingent, comprising around 40 per cent of the total Afghan population of between 22 million and 26 million. The Pashtun population, from which the Taliban draws most of its support, is located predominantly in the south and east of the country.

The areas to the north of the main Hindu Kush mountain range, which dominates the centre of the country, are inhabited by the other major ethnic groups, including Tajiks (around 25 per cent of the population) and Uzbeks (around 6 per cent). The Shi’a

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78 Financial Times, 19 October 2001
79 Accurate population figures are not available given the unstable state of the country in recent decades. All official figures are based on projections of likely population growth since the 1980s.
Hazaras populate the central mountain region and form around 19 per cent of the total population. Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras form the main components of the Northern Alliance.

These ethnic differences have been exacerbated by the civil war. During the early 1990s the anti-Soviet Mujaheddin splintered. In 1992 a power-sharing agreement was reached, but this collapsed and the country lapsed into violent conflict among rival factions and warlords. Coupled with a upsurge in lawlessness, banditry and corruption, this increased popular resentment of the former Mujaheddin alliance and paved the way for the rise of the Taliban from 1994.

Memories of the chaos of the early 1990s are still strong among a significant number of Afghans, who remain distrustful of many of the exiled Mujaheddin leaders now talked of as potential members of a post-Taliban administration. The two main forces within the country – the Northern Alliance and the Taliban – have a similarly divisive effect. The Northern Alliance commands little trust among southern Pashtuns, who view it as a political vehicle for the interests of the northern Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras. Northerners are similarly wary of their prospects under Pashtun domination of the country.

1. Former King Mohammed Zahir Shah

The one figure who apparently retains the respect of much of the population is the exiled former king, Mohammed Zahir Shah, who was overthrown in a coup in 1973. Zahir Shah’s rule is remembered with a certain romanticism by many Afghans, as it was marked by relative economic and political stability. He is also seen as one of the few figures in Afghan politics who is relatively detached from the events of the past few decades. Zahir Shah is of Pashtun descent and could therefore prove significant in attracting Pashtuns to any future administration.

The former king has been living in Italy during his exile, but has retained a close interest in developments in Afghanistan, particularly over the past decade. He has repeatedly advocated the formation of a Loya Jirga – or traditional gathering of tribal and political leaders – to discuss the situation in Afghanistan and consider the formation of an interim government.

Prior to the current crisis, the proposal had made little progress, but interest has been revived as international attention focuses on the need for a credible alternative government to the Taliban. In an interview with the German newspaper, Welt am Sonntag, on 20 October Zahir Shah gave the following outline of his view of the way forward:

What is important is that the people of Afghanistan are able to decide in what kind of state they wish to live. Free elections are not possible at present, for the country is shattered. This is why the Grand Assembly of Afghanistan, the Loya Jirga, must determine the form of a transitional government of Afghanistan. This
transitional government must resolve the most urgent problems, combat suffering, guarantee the country’s security, and give a fresh boost to the economy.

After that, Afghanistan must give itself a new constitution. Its people have to be able to decide what sort of a state they wish to live in. In 1962, Afghanistan decided to have a constitutional monarchy. Discussions must take place on the form the new constitution should take.80

Reports suggest that the former king would not fill the post of head of the transitional government, but that he could emerge as a national figurehead.81 There appears to be little support for a revival of the system of constitutional monarchy, a possibility that has been rejected outright by the current internationally-recognised president of Afghanistan, Burhanuddin Rabbani.

Talks in Rome between representatives of the former king and the Northern Alliance led to an agreement on 1 October on the formation of a ‘Supreme Council of National Unity of Afghanistan’. It was agreed that the council would comprise 50 members proposed by Zahir Shah and 50 members proposed by the Northern Alliance. A further 20 members would be chosen by both sides, or left open to other groups, such as defecting Taliban elements. Reports suggested that a mutually acceptable list of names was agreed by the Alliance and Zahir Shah on 24 October. A preparatory meeting of the council was planned for late October in Istanbul, but has been delayed until early November due to transportation problems.

The intention is apparently for the council to meet and to convene a Loya Jirga, although some Alliance officials have suggested that a lack of time may result in the council taking on the task of establishing a transitional government by electing a new head of state and approving a 10-man committee or cabinet.82

The Loya Jirga is seen by some as a rather unwieldy body that may not be best suited to the complexities of the current situation. The last time one was convened was in 1964 when Zahir Shah was seeking approval of a new constitution for the country. Other doubts relate to the prominent role given to tribal leaders and the extent of their political authority within Afghanistan:

Although they have historically been the source of political authority in Afghanistan, their influence has been eroded by the emergence of regional warlords and criminal gangs that thrive on the narcotics and smuggling trades.83

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81 See for example, Japanese Kyodo news agency, 28 October 2001, from SWB Asia-Pacific, 29 October 2001
82 Japanese Kyodo news agency, 28 October 2001, from SWB Asia-Pacific, 29 October 2001
On the other hand, there are hopes that the tribal leaders may emerge as a viable alternative, capable of filling the political vacuum that has allowed the warlords and criminal elements to thrive.

On 24-25 October around 1,500 mainly Pashtun tribal and religious leaders met in the Pakistani city of Peshawar to discuss the situation. The meeting, designated the Conference for Peace and National Unity, was led by the head of the National Islamic Front of Afghanistan, Pir Ahmad Gailani, a former Mujaheddin resistance leader with close ties to Pakistan. The conference issued a final resolution, which declared:

1. The prevailing crisis of Afghanistan has entered a very critical phase. Military operations carried out by US and its allies force may cause the fall of the Taleban regime any time, which will create a political vacuum. If that vacuum were filled by a particular group through military operation, it would turn to a new phase of bloodshed and disorder and would afflict our nation with new misfortunes. We, the participants of this Conference for Peace and National Unity, want that political struggles should be accelerated to forestall creation of such a situation.

2. We conceive that Afghans themselves should exert every sort of political efforts and struggles for restoration peace. On this account, we consider the role of a Loya Jerga, a traditional and political institution of our nation, very important and consider that the best way to restoration of peace and establishment of a popular government is the convention of a Loya Jerga. We consider the cooperation of UN and OIC [Organisation of Islamic Conference] in convention of a Loya Jerga as important.

3. We consider that the role of the former King of Afghanistan, His Majesty Mohammad Zaher Shah, and other eminent Afghan figures at this historical juncture is very important, and hope that the former king will play effective role, according to his moderate and balanced policy, to put an end to this crisis.

4. We, the participants of the Conference for Peace and National Unity, and all Afghans on the whole condemn strongly these actions that took place on 11 September in USA and demand in strong words of those foreigners who add more to our miseries in this connection that they should not exploit any longer the hospitality of Afghans and should leave our country.

5. We consider the existence of different ethnic groups as valuable assets of our Muslim Afghan nation. We consider the Afghan nation an integrated entity, and consider national unity as the soul of this body.

6. We demand of the warring parties of Afghanistan and USA and its allies to end their operations as early as possible. They should rather pave ground for political solution and understanding to ensure, on one hand, protection of life of innocent people and, on the other hand, prevent further destruction of Afghanistan. Therefore we consider disarmament of Kabul very important. […]84

Maulana Samiul Haq, a prominent figure in the Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Islam – a leading Islamist group in Pakistan – criticised the Peshawar meeting as foreign interference in Afghanistan’s internal affairs:

The Pakistan government recognizes the Taleban government, but at the same time it has started to interfere in Afghanistan’s internal affairs by getting involved in conspiracies of the loya jerga [grand assembly] and a broad-based government. The loya jerga in Peshawar was a drama staged by the American CIA which bribed the traitors of Afghanistan.\(^85\)

It remains to be seen whether Zahir Shah’s initiatives can achieve the support of all factions and their often querulous leaders, as well as balancing the interests of other states. The issue of future Taliban involvement is the subject of particular debate. Pakistan has advocated the involvement of more ‘moderate’ elements of the Taliban in any future administration to counterbalance the undue influence it believes is being accorded to the non-Pashtun Northern Alliance. Ahmed Rashid argues that: “Islamabad wants to bring out a block of Taliban defectors, which would be pro-Pakistan and pose a counter weight to the king and his new found allies in northern Afghanistan.”\(^86\)

For its part, the current Taliban leadership has rejected the prospect of joining a broad-based government. Mowlawi Jalaloddin Haqqani, the Taliban’s military commander in chief, declared on 22 October that:

The Afghans are with the Taleban simply because it is an Islamic government. The so-called broad-based government will, by its very nature, be secular, which will never be acceptable to the Afghans. No one from the Taleban will be part of such an unacceptable government, which will be filled with American, Russian and Indian stooges.\(^87\)

The internationally-recognised president of Afghanistan and political leader of the Northern Alliance, Mr Rabbani, who is an ethnic Tajik, has indicated his support for a broad-based administration, but is strongly opposed to any Taliban involvement. Following a joint meeting on 22 October with President Vladimir Putin of Russia and President Emomali Rahmonov of Tajikistan, Mr Rabbani declared “there is no place in the future Afghan government for the Taleban who have got blood-stained hands and whom the world community has recognized as terrorists”.\(^88\) This position has been supported by the Russian and Tajik governments, who have continued to promote the Rabbani administration as the legitimate government of Afghanistan.

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\(^{85}\) Pakistani newspaper Ausaf, 26 October 2001, from SWB Asia-Pacific, 28 October 2001

\(^{86}\) ‘Former king’s loyalists try to stir rebellion’, Daily Telegraph, 25 October 2001

\(^{87}\) Pakistan newspaper, 22 October 2001, from SWB Asia-Pacific, 23 October 2001

\(^{88}\) ITAR-TASS Russian news agency, 22 October 2001, from SWB Asia-Pacific, 23 October 2001
Other members of the anti-Taliban alliance are similarly opposed to a future role for elements of the Taliban. Ismail Khan, the leader of Alliance forces around the western city of Herat, declared in late October that:

If the Loya Jerga […] succeeds in convening all peoples of Afghanistan, we will welcome the assembly. In that case we will acknowledge the leaders elected by the Loya Jerga. However, we categorically oppose a representation there of the Taleban as a political organization.89

There are doubts in some quarters over whether ‘moderate’ elements of the Taliban exist, and, if they do, over their political influence within the broader Taliban movement. Since the death of Mullah Mohammed Rabbani in April 2001, the main ‘moderate’ within the Taliban leadership has been the foreign minister, Mullah Wakil Ahmad Muttawakil, who has adopted a low profile during the current crisis. In mid-October Mullah Muttawakil was at the centre of considerable speculation after it was reported that he had travelled to Pakistan, allegedly for talks with Pakistani leaders on splitting with the leadership of Mullah Omar. The Taliban ambassador to Pakistan dismissed the reports as unfounded.

Ahmed Rashid also cast doubt on Mullah Muttawakil’s intentions, arguing that:

… Muttawakil, who studied with [Mullah] Omar at the same madrasah [Islamic theology school] and began his political career as Omar’s driver, food taster, translator and note taker, has always depended on Omar for support and has no tribal power. Muttawakil is the closest to being a Taliban technocrat, but he will never cross Omar.90

2. **Potential Role for the United Nations**

In addition to the current co-ordinating role being played by Mr Brahimi, it is widely anticipated that the United Nations will have a key role to play in any post-conflict transition. The former king has called for extensive international involvement in Afghanistan, particularly through the UN:

No transitional government will have a chance without the help of the United Nations and the western countries; the problems of my country, in which so many terrorists are now active, are too great. We need assistance, to guarantee the security and independence of Afghanistan.91

There is some debate over the extent of the UN’s proposed involvement. UN officials have bitter memories of the repeated mediation efforts made by UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar during 1992 to halt the civil conflict in Afghanistan. Some have voiced

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89 *Interfax* news agency, 26 October 2001, from *SWB Asia-Pacific*, 27 October 2001
90 *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 18 October 2001
concerns in private that the UN will be given over-ambitious objectives without adequate support from member states. The current Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, has cautioned that the effectiveness of the UN depends on the member states and the Security Council “in terms of the kind of mandate we are given, and the resources and the support that comes with it.”92

There has been discussion on the possible deployment of a small international peacekeeping force. A number of countries have been suggested as contributors to such a force, including neutral Muslim states such as Turkey, Bangladesh and Morocco. However, Mr Brahimi has said the United Nations should be very careful about sending peacekeepers to Afghanistan or taking over the administration of the war-torn country, declaring that “Afghanistan is a very difficult country. It’s a very proud people, and they don’t like to be ordered around by foreigners.”93

Some commentators believe the UN should be given an advisory role, which would involve its refugee, development and food agencies in the task of reconstruction. Other agencies, including the World Bank, would have an important role in financing economic reconstruction. Diplomats have also suggested that an international donor conference could be convened to provide funding for the reconstruction effort.

The Bush administration, members of which have been critical in the past of US involvement in post-conflict ‘nation-building’ in the Balkans, has declared its support for the UN to take a leading role in any post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan. US Secretary of State Colin Powell outlined the US approach in response to a question on 17 October:

> We may see a political vacuum immediately or sort of a deteriorating situation that leads to a political vacuum and I think what you are going to need, as I said before, is some sort of broad-based assemblage of individuals and leaders representing all aspects of Afghan society who will come together with a common purpose and perhaps using the position of the king as a rallying point and, from that, let them come up with some ideas of how they wish to be governed in the future. Then use the United Nations as the facilitating body that will help them go back into the country. Provide a sense of order and have the UN perhaps perform some interim role as they are organizing themselves and gathering their strength and developing the capability they need to govern themselves. It’s not something that the United States or any other nation is going to be able to dictate. I think it’s something that we have to help them with, something that we have to help them get organized, support, and use international bodies as has been used in the past in other situations, Cambodia, East Timor, not

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92 Financial Times, 16 October 2001
93 Associated Press, 17 October 2001
that those are models. This one is rather unique. The UN has experience in doing this kind of thing and Mr. Brahimi is quite experienced in this regard as well.94

A senior State Department Official, Richard Haass, has been appointed to liaise with the UN and Mr Brahimi on the formation of a post-Taliban administration.

The British government has argued strongly for the international community to play a significant role in any post-conflict rebuilding of Afghanistan. In a speech to the International Institute for Strategic Studies on 22 October, Foreign Secretary Jack Straw outlined four principles that he believed “should guide the international community’s approach to rebuilding Afghanistan as soon as the immediate crisis is at an end”:95

- First, that the future should, above all, be placed in the hands of the people of Afghanistan themselves;
- Second, that we need a global coalition to help rebuild Afghanistan;
- Third, that the United Nations should take the lead in the political process;
- And fourth, that we have to devote the resources and the political will needed to finish the job.

Insisting that solutions imposed on the country from outside would not work, Mr Straw declared that, within a certain framework,

the form of that government, and the process which leads to its establishment, should […] be up to the Afghan people themselves. […] We have to facilitate, to create the environment for a political reconstruction, but it is the Afghans themselves who must decide. […]

It is for the Afghan people to decide whether a Loya Jirga, the traditional form of constituent assembly, is the best way forward, or rather some other localised form of decision-making. And it is for them to decide whether the King, who has said he is willing to return, is the best person to act as a figurehead.

He also noted the interests of neighbouring states, declaring that

The main condition for Afghanistan’s stability is that any new government should have not only the assent of its own people but the support of its neighbours and the global community, and an understanding that they are not going to compete with each other in Afghanistan.

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94 Washington File, 17 October 2001
95 Speech by Foreign Secretary Jack Straw to IISS, 22 October 2001, from the FCO web site at http://www.fco.gov.uk/news/speechtext.asp?5448
With regard to the role of the UN in the process, Mr Straw commented that

there are no state institutions worth speaking of in Kabul: no executive, no judiciary, no legislature, no civil service. Any interim government arriving there would have to bring much of its own administration with it.

There is only one body which can properly facilitate this – the United Nations. […]

Through its humanitarian aid and other programmes in Afghanistan, the UN has more experience of the country than any other body. It has been running many services throughout the country. It also has behind it the relevant experience of helping to rebuild a shattered nation in Cambodia, East Timor and Kosovo.

Only the UN has the global reach, the instruments and the expertise to provide effective relief and reconstruction in Afghanistan. It will need to do this in an active partnership with committed states, with those which share borders with Afghanistan or are very close to it, like India, with the Permanent Members of the Security Council, and with others who have a close regional interest. The EU will, I am sure, have an important role too.

He also expressed caution over the size of the task, commenting that

Afghanistan’s development needs will be huge. The cost of rebuilding Bosnia was $5 billion. Afghanistan has four times Bosnia’s population. Reconstructing Afghanistan could take five to ten years to complete.

But we have to be ready to bear the cost, because if we do not, the price we pay will be far greater. We will pay it in more terrorist atrocities, more lives lost and more economies disrupted.

Only a real, sustained commitment stands any chance of providing the people of Afghanistan with a country free from domination by terrorists and criminals.
C. Humanitarian situation

For some years Afghanistan has faced severe humanitarian difficulties. These did not originate during Operation Enduring Freedom and the Taliban carry responsibility for some of the problems, but the current uncertainty has added to them.

Afghanistan is a low income, least developed country (LLDC) and reliable economic and social statistics are unavailable. Population estimates vary, but figures from the World Bank’s World Development Indicators database are as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Afghanistan</th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population, total (millions)</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population growth (annual %)</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population density (people per sq. km)</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy at birth (years)</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fertility rate, total (births per woman)</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortality rate, infant (per 1,000 live births)</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>147.3</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortality rate, under-5 (per 1,000 live births)</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>220.0</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban population (% of total)</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural population density (per sq. km of arable land)</td>
<td>232.4</td>
<td>..</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiteracy rate, adult male (% of males 15+)</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiteracy rate, adult female (% of females 15+)</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>78.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To put this in context,

- The 1999 life expectancy at birth of 46 years was similar to that of sub-Saharan Africa; the global average is 67.
- The infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births of 147 in 1999 compared to a world average of 54, 98 for LLDCs and 92 for sub-Saharan Africa.
- Only 13 per cent of Afghanistan’s 26 million population had access to safe water in 2000 and a similar percentage had access to sanitation.
- The adult female illiteracy rate of 78 per cent in 2000 compared to a global average of 30 per cent.

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96 This section was contributed by Patsy Richards from the Library’s Economic Policy and Statistics Section.
99 World Bank World Development Indicators 2001 and World Development Indicators database and DFID Statistics on International Development 1995/6-1999/00, December 2000
1. The refugee situation

On 4 September 2001 a UN report entitled *The Deepening Crisis* outlined action to support critically vulnerable Afghans for the upcoming winter period and beyond. This included people dependent on international assistance for their survival as a result of three years of drought, many years of fighting and a ‘huge human rights deficit’. UN assistance would include food distribution, camps for internally displaced people, and help for people to stay in their own homes.

The situation has deteriorated in recent weeks. By 16 September, all UN, NGO and ICRC international staff had been withdrawn from the country. On 27 September 2001 UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan issued a donor alert seeking $584 million to support some 7.5 million Afghan people for the next six months.100 The donor alert outlined the seriousness of the situation:

- There were famine-like conditions in some areas but food distribution had decreased drastically and stocks were close to depletion. UN international staff had no access to Afghanistan and if national staff were forced to leave their duty stations this would further erode the capacity to deliver food.
- Acute malnutrition is expected to increase over the next six months, with young children and pregnant women at highest risk.
- Up to 7 million people will require health services over the next six months, more so if the food and water crisis worsens. If security allows and supplies are available, UN/NGO supported health services will be able to function; national health services, without external support, will have significantly less capacity.
- A large displaced population will create an extraordinary need for safe water and sanitation: ‘life saving is the goal for water and sanitation services over the next 6 months’.
- Shelter and specific non-food items are particularly urgent because of the approaching winter.

The report outlined areas of equal concern, including the protection of basic human rights, education, food protection and de-mining.101

As a result of additional population movements, it was estimated at 1 October 2001 that over 5 million Afghans were internally displaced or refugees.102 The UN forecasts that the number of people at risk may increase by a further 2 million, if families have no food

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101 A detailed account of donor pledges to the UNHCR component is available in *2001: Afghanistan Emergency Funding Overview*, 23 October 2001, from UNHCR web site at [http://www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch)

102 DFID Afghanistan crisis situation report No.8, 1 October 2001
at home or are displaced for other reasons. With further internally displaced or stranded persons, in all some 7.5 million people may become reliant on international aid.\textsuperscript{103}

DFID has made more detailed estimates, based on a number of agency sources, of the situation by country:

**HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND REGION AS OF 12/10/01**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Refugees Pre 11/09</th>
<th>Refugees Planned For</th>
<th>Refugees Post 11/09</th>
<th>Food (metric tonnes)</th>
<th>Food (people’s worth/mth)</th>
<th>Tarpaulin (families’ worth)</th>
<th>Blankets</th>
<th>Tents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6,232</td>
<td>372,282</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>8,800</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>2,200,000</td>
<td>minimal</td>
<td>4,150,000</td>
<td>24,225</td>
<td>1,389</td>
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<td>560,514</td>
<td>5,295</td>
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<td>3,598</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,000,000</td>
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<td>1,747,192</td>
<td>2349</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

NB. Figures use an assumption of 5 people per family.
Tents, sheets & tarps are per family as this will be the way they are distributed- not 5 people per shelter
NB. Figures are cumulative from a number of agency sources


\textsuperscript{103} Summary table of vulnerable populations 27 September 2001 Annex to UN Donor Alert, HC Deb 15 October 2001, c799w
According to UNHCR the numbers leaving Afghanistan were not immediately as high as expected, although the reasons for this are unclear.\textsuperscript{104}

The Pakistani government remains concerned over the possible influx of refugees, fearing it could lead to further instability in the northern border areas. During the present crisis the authorities have closed the border and allowed in only a small number of women, children and wounded. Many more have found their way across more remote passes over the border, but they face deportation if caught inside Pakistan. The UNHCR, Ruud Lubbers, has called on both Iran and Pakistan to open their borders to those with credible stories of personal fear, suggesting that this could produce a reasonable limit on the numbers involved.\textsuperscript{105} He has also suggested that men fleeing conscription be allowed in.

The UNHCR claims it can accommodate up to 150,000 refugees in 15 camps inside Pakistan. According to its website,

\begin{quote}
\begin{itemize}
\item at a conservative estimate, at least 80,000 Afghans have crossed into Pakistan from Afghanistan since September 11th. But only a small fraction are accommodated in a refugee staging camp in the Quetta area. Most Afghans have blended into existing refugee settlements or have found accommodation with the local population. Many of them are believed to be living in extremely difficult conditions without access to international aid. UNHCR officials recognize the validity of Pakistan's fear of security problems in the wake of a possible large influx of Afghan refugees and the need to separate civilians from persons who could represent a security risk.\textsuperscript{106}
\end{itemize}
\end{quote}

Pakistan claims to have reached agreement with the Taliban to allow a ‘tent village’ to be established within Afghanistan but close to the border, and that NGOs and UN agencies might be allowed access to those seeking refuge there.\textsuperscript{107}

Amnesty International has expressed concerns over the placement of refugee camps in Pathan tribal areas. It argues that this will present difficulties for relief workers, and also for the refugees. If the Pakistani Government’s fears of Taliban infiltration of the camps were realised, genuine refugees might be placed at risk of reprisal from those Taliban elements. They might also be subject to hostility from the local population, as a result both of its sympathetic view of the Taliban and of its perception that the refugee camps would be in competition for scarce resources.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{104} HC Deb 8 October 2001 c895 and UNHCR 11 October 2001 Afghanistan Humanitarian Update No.15
\textsuperscript{105} UN says ‘don’t ignore refugees’, BBC News website at http://news.bbc.co.uk, 30 October 2001
\textsuperscript{106} Afghanistan Humanitarian Update No 27, 30 October 2001, at http://www.unhcr.ch/
\textsuperscript{107} ‘Pakistan, Taleban understanding reported on setting up refugee village,’ Radio Pakistan, in BBC Monitoring, Asia Pacific, 25 October 2001
\textsuperscript{108} Pakistan: refugee camps in tribal areas - a risky strategy, ASA 33/025/2001, 18 October 2001
2. Food distribution

Food convoys were suspended after the departure of international agency workers, and, as a result of problems posed by the closure of borders and the breakdown of local transportation systems, distribution declined drastically. The UN built up food at potential border crossing points, and the World Food Programme (WFP) and UNICEF began sending convoys of trucks carrying food and other supplies into Afghanistan on a ‘test’ basis. The WFP said on 9 October that two convoys had arrived in the north-west and Kabul and a third was expected in Herat. Convoys were loaded and ready to move throughout the region and the agency would resume the transportation of food as soon as it could secure drivers, and once conditions allowed.

In the debate on 8 October 2001 during the third recall of Parliament, the Prime Minister said that a priority had been to re-establish food supply routes into Afghanistan, and some 5,000 tonnes had entered in the previous fortnight. Clare Short said that she had been heartened, after first fearing famine in Afghanistan, because the WFP had resumed its aid convoys. Even if commercial Afghan drivers, rather than UN workers, had been used and some food had become diverted, around 500 tonnes of food a day had still been reaching the intended warehouses. That amount would have to be doubled for a six-week period to feed people and to lay down winter supplies, but the activity had been disrupted since the onset of US-led military action.

As of 10 October, UNHCR said the security situation was still seriously hampering the relief effort but on 12 October DFID said small-scale deliveries had resumed.

In her Statement on 24 October 2001 Ms Short said that

Since deliveries recommenced on 11 October, the World Food Programme has continued to make progress; regional stockpiles are adequate and deliveries are entering the country in increasing amounts. The World Food Programme is moving towards achieving its target of delivering 1,700 tonnes of food a day. Over 5,000 tonnes were delivered in the past week, and when I was in Peshawar a few days ago rates had reached 1,300 tonnes a day.

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109 DFID Afghanistan Crisis: Situation Report No. 8, 1 October 2001
110 UN Noon briefing, 9 October 2001
111 HC Deb 8 October 2001, c813
112 ibid., c895
113 UNHCR Afghanistan Humanitarian Update No. 16, 10 October 2001
114 DFID Afghanistan Crisis: Situation Report No: 13, 12 October 2001
115 HC Deb 24 October 2001, c283
The WFP has calculated that in all some 500,000 metric tonnes of food is needed for the six months to 31 March 2002.\textsuperscript{116} The latest update from the WFP is as follows:

WFP has accelerated its overland deliveries into Afghanistan as it aims to deliver 52,000 metric tonnes of food aid by November to an estimated six million Afghans who run the risk of starvation over the next six months. Over the past week, the Agency has sent truck convoys rolling into Afghanistan along a series of humanitarian aid corridors that start in Iran, Tajikistan, Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

With daily truck deliveries rising from an average of 200 tonnes to 900, the Agency estimates that it has transported more than 5,000 tonnes of food in the last seven days - enough to feed 1.5 million people.

... However, with the mountainous northern provinces usually cut off by snow for up to five months from mid-November, WFP is racing against time to buffer its stocks ahead of a harsh winter.

Without prepositioned food stocks to draw on, the Agency believes some two million people in the mountain passes of central Afghanistan and the Panjshher Valley could run out of food by December.

WFP is looking into the possibility of airdropping up to 5,000 tonnes of food aid per month to the exposed areas, home to some of the most vulnerable people in Afghanistan’s seemingly never-ending cycle of drought and war.\textsuperscript{117}

The US military has already carried out airdrops of food packages into remote areas of Afghanistan.\textsuperscript{118} Christian Aid has called this action misguided in that it diverts attention from the real crisis and devalues the concept of humanitarian aid; those most in need may not get the food, which may instead be accessed by soldiers and others. Furthermore, Christian Aid says Afghanistan is second only to Angola in the number of land-mines over large areas of the country, so indiscriminate air drops put at risk those who go in search of food parcels.\textsuperscript{119} Similarly, Médecins sans Frontières has dismissed these drops as propaganda and the US Defence Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, has reportedly said that the only real way to deliver food aid is by road, with protection against the Taliban.\textsuperscript{120}

There is a history of food being airdropped in Afghanistan. For instance, during the crisis that followed the earthquake in 1998 the UN ran an airdrop operation for a region particularly inaccessible through snow and rugged terrain.\textsuperscript{121}

\begin{itemize}
\item[116] EMOP 10126.0 – Regional Emergency Operation: “Emergency Food Assistance to Refugees and Vulnerable Populations in Afghanistan”
\item[117] WFP Afghan emergency operation: regional overview, 23 October 2001, and Humanitarian Update No.16, 26 October 2001
\item[118] DFID Afghanistan Crisis: Situation Report No: 11, 8 October 2001
\item[119] After the start of the bombing of Afghanistan: a Christian Aid perspective 10 October 2001 at http://www.christian-aid.org.uk/afghanistan/0110food.htm
\item[120] ‘Keeping all options open’. Special Report from The Economist, 13 October 2001, p.18
\end{itemize}
Ms Short has confirmed:  

Air drops are an expensive and difficult way of delivering food, as the hon. Lady knows from the experience of Sudan, so we must get as much in as we can. Not all the country is inaccessible when the snow comes; only some of it is. For the remote areas or the areas that become inaccessible, the World Food Programme is thinking about the possibility of air drops.

[...]

The US air drops have been more a matter of winning hearts and minds than of the provision of the massive amounts of food that are necessary.

3. A pause in the bombing?

The humanitarian situation in Afghanistan and the approaching onset of winter has provoked a debate on whether the needs of the Afghan people would be best met by a pause in the bombing. The key question is whether the Taliban would allow aid agencies and the UN to operate without interference. Opponents of a bombing pause argue that the current crisis is the product of years of Taliban harassment and non-co-operation with the international relief effort. In their view, it is highly unlikely that the Taliban would change its policy of interference and allow aid through.

Relations between the Taliban and foreign aid agencies declined steadily after the fall of Kabul in 1996, but aid workers noticed a sharper increase in tension from 1998 as Mr bin Laden’s influence within the Taliban increased. In the past three years there have been a series of confrontations between the Taliban and aid agencies over the employment of women, female education and health facilities. In 1998 the Taliban ordered international aid agencies operating in Kabul to move to bomb-damaged facilities on the edge of Kabul, near to the front line. The agencies rejected the move as too dangerous and decided to withdraw all their staff from Kabul in mid-August. As a result of the withdrawal of aid, widespread shortages of food, water and medicine were reported during the winter months. A similar situation occurred in December 2000 following the imposition of UN sanctions.

In comments to the House in early October, Ms Short said that even before the events of 11 September the Taliban regime was making humanitarian work in Afghanistan very difficult; there were resources in the UK but these could not be deployed inside Afghanistan. Aid workers still in Afghanistan are reporting frequent personal harassment and looting of stocks by Taliban fighters.
A number of aid agencies have issued a public plea for a pause in the bombing, believing this, as well as the presence of the Taliban, to be hampering food supply. For example,

- Christian Aid has called for a ‘humanitarian pause in the bombing’ to allow Afghan hauliers to deliver aid.\(^{128}\)
- Oxfam has called for all parties, including the Taliban, Northern Alliance, and the coalition to publicly guarantee that the program to feed the people in Afghanistan will in no way be impeded or targeted by either political or military forces engaged in the conflict. Oxfam wants a pause in all military action until winter to give WFP and others the greatest chance to deliver the maximum food.\(^{129}\)
- Save the Children appears to have stopped short of calling for a pause, but says deteriorating law and order is having an impact on their programs. People are moving from urban to rural areas, and while reports of large-scale cross-border refugee movements may be exaggerated, there is an increased influx of refugees joining their extended families in existing camps in Pakistan. Civilian casualties may undermine their humanitarian aid efforts.\(^{130}\)

In response to these calls Ms Short has said:\(^{131}\)

> I pick no fight with the aid agencies. The problem was that they issued their statement when I was in Pakistan, so wherever I went I was asked whether the humanitarian situation meant that we needed a pause in the bombing. It is not true that the bombing is the cause of our problem. It is not true that, if we paused, we would help the people of Afghanistan. Indeed, I think that all humanitarian relief would then be harassed even more than it is now. It is a mistaken call. We all know why in their hearts good people hate bombing, but they are wrong to have made that call. I think that it is my duty to try to explain that as clearly as I can.

### 4. Financial assistance

Since the attacks the UK has committed an additional £51 million, the latest £15 million of this from the Treasury reserve.\(^{132}\) DFID says that almost £21.5 million has already been allocated to UN agencies, the Red Cross movement and NGOs for their work both in Afghanistan and in the region. £11 million has been set aside for assistance to poorer communities in Pakistan most affected by new influxes of refugees. The £15 million announced on 12 October will be used selectively where it will have greatest impact in helping the international system to respond effectively to the needs of the Afghan people.

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128 Press Release Christian Aid responds to Clare Short’s statement on Afghanistan 24.10.01 *Only a quarter of the food needed is reaching Afghanistan: and less than one fifth can be distributed*


131 HC Deb 24 October 2001, c291

132 Source: DFID, 16 October 2001. In all cases aid is being provided both to Afghans still inside the country and for the situation in neighbouring countries.
people. Before the attacks, gross public expenditure on bilateral aid from the UK was as follows:

**UK bilateral aid to Afghanistan**

\[ \text{£ thousand} \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995/96</td>
<td>4,986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996/97</td>
<td>9,644</td>
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<td>4,123</td>
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<td>5,452</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*DFID Statistics on International Development 1995/6-1999/00*

The UK share of multilateral aid to Afghanistan in 1998 was an estimated £5.3 million. The main multilateral donors acting in the country over the past years have been the UN and EU. The UN’s donor alert was outlined above, and on 8 October the UN Emergency Relief Co-ordinator reported that donors had the intention to provide over $700 million for the humanitarian effort. Of this pledged money, donors had made commitments of $301 million by 15 October.

The US government has pledged the following:

- On October 4, President Bush announced a new contribution of $320 million in humanitarian assistance to Afghans. This assistance includes food, medicine, blankets and shelter.
- On October 22, the U.S. announced an additional contribution of $10 million to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to assist Afghan refugees fleeing to neighboring countries. This brings U.S. contribution to the UNHCR to $14 million to date. These contributions are part of the $320 million announced by President Bush October 4.
- And on October 24, USAID awarded $26.5 million in grants to assist the people of Afghanistan. The grants are for medical supplies, shelter, and winterization assistance, water/sanitation projects, complementary foods such as cooking oil, and logistical support, according to a USAID press release.
- These funds were budgeted before September 11 and are not part of the $320 million allocation.

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134 DFID Statistics on International Development December 2000
137 HC Deb 15 October 2001, c799w
The UNHCR has expressed frustration at the red tape it is facing in Pakistan trying to establish refugee camps and at the slowness with which aid pledged is coming through. High Commissioner Lubbers said on 11 October: ‘I appeal to donors to make their contributions now, before it is too late.’ By 29 October 2001 UNHCR had received $38 million in cash contributions. It says it needs $50 million for the first phase of the operation for up to 400,000 possible new arrivals in Pakistan, Iran and elsewhere. The WFP has received some $18 million in donations so far, of which $4.4 million is from the UK.

The European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) has announced a further €4 million for the crisis, making the total of ECHO assistance to Afghans €27.3 million. The additional funds will be channelled through UNHCR (€2 million), WFP (€1 million) and the Red Cross (€1 million). The total amount of EU humanitarian aid (EU Member States and the European Commission) to the Afghan people stands at €314 million, of which a third is managed directly by the Commission.

Pakistan has also been helped by trade deals from the EU and US. On 16 October the Commission announced a preferential trade package for Pakistan which includes removal and reduction of tariffs, quota increases and improved access for EU exporters. Details of US financial assistance to Pakistan are outlined in Section IV.

5. Future Assistance

The humanitarian situation will not be resolved speedily and commitments have been made to Afghanistan and the surrounding countries in the longer term. For example, during the debate at the third recall of Parliament, the Prime Minister said that once the conflict was over the UK’s commitment would continue:

We are doing all we can to limit the effect of our action on ordinary Afghans. I repeat: we will not walk away from them once the conflict ends, as has happened in the past. We will stand by them and help them to a better, more stable future under a broad-based Government involving all the different ethnic groupings. That is our commitment to the people of Afghanistan.

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139 UNHCR Afghanistan Humanitarian Update No. 17, 11 October 2001
140 UNHCR Emergency Update No.26, 29 October 2001
142 September 2001 exchange rates, £1 = 1.606 Euros Financial Statistics October 2001
143 ‘EU humanitarian aid to Afghan people over €300 million’, ECHO, Brussels, 8 October 2001
144 Press Notice IP/01/1426 Brussels, 16 October 2001
145 ‘US plan to ease Pakistan debt burden’, Financial Times, 22 October 2001, p.2
146 HC Deb 8 October 2001, c811-812
During the same debate Ms Short gave a similar message:

I want to end by underlining once again our determination not just to provide aid to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran to deal with the immediate crises but to increase the food and humanitarian relief getting into Afghanistan to see people through the crisis. We are determined to stick by Pakistan and Afghanistan for the long term, as hon. Members have called on us to do throughout the debate. Clearly, the role of Pakistan is crucial. We need to help that country with its short-term needs and economic reform, and with the transition to democracy. We have been engaged in that work for some time.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has been stressing that ‘innocent civilians should not be punished for the actions of their government’; since the world is united against terrorism, it should be ‘equally united in protecting and assisting the victims of emergencies and disasters’\(^\text{147}\). Mr Annan added

that given the current circumstances, the process of political change in Afghanistan might be accelerated. “The people themselves may decide the time has come for a change, and I think we should be prepared to work with them and to help them through the difficult humanitarian phase, then through a transitional period if they come together and work to form a broad-based government.”\(^\text{148}\)

Mr Annan also stressed that Afghanistan would require a great deal of international assistance in rehabilitation and reconstruction, adding that the UN would likely be part of that effort.\(^\text{149}\)

\(^{147}\) UN daily news round-up at [http://www.un.org/News/dh/latest.htm#42](http://www.un.org/News/dh/latest.htm#42)
\(^{148}\) UN Daily Highlights, 12 October 2001
\(^{149}\) The WFP, DFID and UNHCR have been issuing frequent updates and reports on the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, available on their web sites, to which readers are referred.
IV Pakistan

There has been unhappiness in Pakistan over the military campaign and President Musharraf’s cooperation with the USA. In some areas protests have become violent, and the police have used force to restore order. The most intense protests have been in areas close to the border with Afghanistan, where ethnicity binds the local Pathan tribesmen with the southern Afghans from whom the Taliban are drawn. These areas are also home to militant Islamist groups which the Pakistani military and intelligence services have fostered in the past. Many have called for a jihad against the USA and its allies, and have pledged support to Mr bin Laden and the Taliban. There have also been protests in the more cosmopolitan areas, including tens of thousands who took to the streets in Karachi in late October to show support for Mr bin Laden. The military regime has made efforts to contain dissent, placing some religious leaders under house arrest.

Most observers felt that a level of protest in parts of Pakistan was inevitable. Interest focused on two main issues. One was the extent to which the military regime would remain unified in the face of protests from groups with which it had close links in the past. The other was the extent to which the protests would take on significance beyond the immediate expression of anger over the policy of support for the USA.

1. Policy of the regime

President Musharraf has addressed the crisis in terms of Pakistan’s own interests. The decision to cooperate with the USA, including the opening of Pakistani airspace to US military flights, the sharing of intelligence, and the use of airfields at Jacobabad and Pasni for emergency rescue operations, has been described as “a paradigm shift in Islamabad’s thinking towards the Taliban, viewing them as a strategic liability rather than as an asset.”

In his address to the nation on 19 September 2001 General Musharraf said that he had done “everything for Afghanistan and the Taliban when the world is against them.” He said that he had

met 20 to 25 world leaders and talked to each of them in favour of the Taliban …
I have been repeating this stance before all leaders but I am sorry to say that none of our friends accepted this.

150 For further background on these groups, see Research Paper 01/72. For a range of reactions to the onset of military action, see ‘Political circles condemn US attack on Afghanistan,’ Jang (Pakistani newspaper), in BBC Monitoring, Asia Pacific, 9 October 2001. For more recent reactions, see ‘Islamic clerics refuse to toe government line on Afghanistan,’ Jang, in BBC Monitoring, Asia Pacific, 22 October 2001.


He went on to say that he was “worried about Pakistan only” and gave “top priority to the defence of Pakistan.”

Shortly before the onset of the military campaign General Musharraf made changes to his military command. On 6 October 2001 he extended indefinitely his own tenure as Chief of Army Staff, which was due to expire the next day. On 7 October 2001 he forced the retirement of the Head of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Lieutenant General Mahmood Ahmad, by promoting him to the rank of full General and replacing him as Vice Chief of Army Staff. General Ahmad had a close relationship with the Taliban leader, Mullah Omar, and made two trips to Afghanistan before the commencement of the military campaign, ostensibly in an effort to secure the surrender to justice of Mr bin Laden. He was replaced as Head of the ISI by Lieutenant General Ehamul Haq, described as ‘a pro-Western moderate’. The ISI was closely involved with the Taliban before the 11 September attacks, providing military advisers and supplying it with arms, ammunition and fuel. General Ahmad was replaced as Vice Chief of Army Staff by another moderate, General Muhammed Yousuf Khan.

At the same time General Musharraf also promoted Lieutenant General Mohammed Aziz Khan to the rank of full General and the largely ceremonial position of Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff Committee. General Aziz has been described as having “puritanical Islamic beliefs and undisguised sympathy for the Taliban regime.” In his new position he will not attend meetings of the main body which shapes Afghan policy, the group of the nine corps commanders over which General Musharraf presides.

General Musharraf has called repeatedly for a short campaign and insisted on Pakistan’s place in discussions over future constitutional arrangements in Afghanistan. On 8 October 2001 he gave a press conference at which he said, “one is hoping and I have got definite assurances that this operation will be short. It ought to be targeted, and also it should not be having collateral damage.” He also said that

this action should not be allowed to be taken advantage of by the Northern Alliance. The Northern Alliance must not draw mileage out of this action and the post-action scenario has to be extremely balanced.

He went on to give “certain parameters” for the political dispensation after the military campaign. These were as follows:

We must ensure the unity, the stability of Afghanistan and bring peace into Afghanistan. Secondly, whatever dispensation, it must be broad-based, it must be multiethnic taking the demographic composition of Afghanistan in view. Thirdly,

155 *ibid*.
no political dispensation should be seen to be imposed on Afghanistan. I would strongly recommend that a political dispensation should be facilitated rather than being imposed on the people of Afghanistan. And lastly, the fourth parameter. Certainly, Pakistan would like to have a friendly Afghanistan on our west.

These comments may be motivated not only by the interest which Pakistan has in ‘a friendly Afghanistan,’ but also by the regime’s interest in maintaining favour with the Pathan community within Pakistan. There is evidence that mainstream opposition political groups may seek to rally religious disquiet over the regime’s Afghan policy in an effort to achieve wider political change.158

One leading commentator has argued that

Pakistan’s main interest in Afghanistan is to press for the inclusion of the Pashtun elements in a new government to counter-balance the non-Pashtun and the Northern Alliance, which it fears would work against its interests. As long as they’re represented, Pakistan’s interests could be served.159

During his visit to Pakistan in early October Mr Blair commented that, “most people accept that the best thing for everyone is to have a broad-based, relatively stable and democratic as possible regime in Afghanistan.” He added that “it is very important indeed to take account of the fact that Pakistan has a valid interest and close involvement in the arrangements for any successor regime.”160

However, Pakistan’s position may not prove universally popular within Afghanistan, nor among other neighbouring states.

For instance, Pakistan has been criticised for placing at risk refugee Afghan intellectuals opposed to the Taliban. An agreement was reached with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees that decisions on Afghans claiming refugee status should be subject to joint review. In June 2000 this arrangement was neglected and a prominent Afghan intellectual, Professor Mohammad Rahim Elham, was deported from Pakistan to Afghanistan. Amnesty International declared itself “concerned for the safety and whereabouts” of Professor Elham, who according to the authorities was deported for “making anti-Pakistan statements and accusing Pakistan of interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.”161 Amnesty claimed that “dozens of Afghans living in Pakistan have received death threats and several of them have been assassinated.” It reported the case of Mohammad Enam Wak, a member of the nationalist Afghan Mellat party, who

160 The Guardian, 6 October 2001
had published a book “in which he debated the formation of a state on the basis of ethnic identity.” Mr Wak was shot and wounded at his home in Peshawar two weeks before Professor Elham’s deportation, and the police had not carried out an investigation at that point.

The Northern Alliance has criticised Pakistan’s “continued interference” and argued that “if Pakistan is allowed to play a key role in shaping the future of Afghanistan, it will play a spoiler’s role.”162 Iran and the Central Asian Republics might also be expected to demur at a leading role for Pakistan.

2. Internal dissent

a. Background

The current military regime came to power in 1999, and was greeted with relief by many Pakistanis who were disillusioned with civilian politicians. Corruption had reached very high levels, as had crime rates, and small arms proliferated, particularly in the tribal areas. Sanctions imposed after the nuclear tests in 1998 had their impact on an already fragile economy, weakened by years of internal conflict, mismanagement and structural problems such as the narrow tax base (about 1 per cent of Pakistanis are estimated to pay tax).163 The perception that leading politicians of both main parties used their terms in office to serve personal interests in neglect of the common good led many to view the military as a force for stability. One of the main obstacles to achieving that stability was presented by the Islamist groups which the military, and the last civilian administration, promoted in the past.

According to one commentator, the current situation may present General Musharraf with an opportunity to intensify his efforts to reduce the influence of these groups:

> recent events have backed the President into his preferred corner. He is now compelled to confront radical Islam in his own backyard, a force that will be incensed by the role of the US and the compliance of the Islamabad government. The uprising has already started, though not quite with the ferocity anticipated, threatening to split the country geographically and politically.164

The same author acknowledges that “outright civil war … may not materialise,” but the prospect of lower level disturbances might still become a consideration in General Musharraf’s calculations.

164 ibid.
b. Reactions to the campaign

During Operation *Enduring Freedom* the Pakistani authorities have made strenuous efforts to contain expressions of dissent within the country. There have been sizeable protests, sometimes violent, in border towns, and force has been used against the demonstrators. In Quetta some 10-15,000 protestors, mostly Afghan refugees, took part in a violent rally immediately after the onset of military operations. Some positioned themselves on rooftops and shot at the police, who returned fire. One protestor was killed and many people on both sides were injured. The following day four cinemas showing Western films were burned down, and a police station and several banks were attacked. Both security forces and protestors have attacked journalists covering the incidents, which have taken place in major cities including Karachi and Islamabad, as well as in the frontier regions.165

Some leading members of Islamist groups have been placed under house arrest for limited periods. For instance, Maulana Fazlur Rehman of the Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Islam (JUI) was put under arrest on 7 October 2001 to prevent him from holding an anti-US rally, according to authorities in the North West Frontier Province.166 Mr Rehman had called on his supporters to seize any military installations that the US forces might use, and he was due to address a rally in Multan, in the Punjab. The house arrest lasted for a week, but since his release Mr Rehman has been charged with treason for inciting attacks against the Pakistani armed forces.

On 23 October 2001 the JUI called a rally at the Shahbaz airbase in Jacobabad, and some 3,000 security personnel were brought in. They blocked access to the city, arrested hundreds of militants and prevented the leader of the JUI, Qazi Hussain Ahmed, from travelling to the area. Mr Ahmed claimed that “the days of this Government are numbered, and Musharraf will no longer be in power after a few days.”167 On Friday 26 October 2001 tens of thousands marched through Karachi in the largest demonstration to date. 5,000 police were deployed and there were no reports of violence. There were similar protests in Lahore and Quetta, the latter attended by some 20,000 people. Some religious leaders at these demonstrations called for the overthrow of General Musharraf’s regime.168

The authorities have contained threats of insurgency so far, and the majority of Pakistanis seem merely to entertain qualms over the military campaign rather than direct hostility to the Musharraf regime, but the resentment among extremists still has meaningful effects. Towards the end of October 2001 militants took control of the Karakoram highway, an important trading route for the north of Pakistan, which links Islamabad with the northern

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areas, passes through the part of Kashmir under Pakistani control and then on through the Karakoram Pass into China. According to the *Frontier Post*,

armed activists in the northern areas continue to hold hilltops overlooking the strategic Karakoram Highway (KKH), which they have blocked with boulders.

According to one report, the TNSM [Tehrik-i-Nifaz-i-Sharait-i-Muhammadi] leader has denied any link to blockade. While administration officials were in talks Sunday evening to make possible resumption of traffic on the KKH, armed puritans were obstructing efforts to clear the strategic artery.

Public address systems of mosques in the area continued to air instructions for the activists on the hilltops, asking them to hold their positions.

Sunday was the fourth day of KKH blockade. A dispatch in the evening said the evening said the authorities were deliberating ‘strict measures’.169

The blockade has left passengers stranded in Gilgit, in the far north of Kashmir, and has prevented trade journeys between Islamabad and the north. 40 trailers of Chinese aid for Afghanistan have been trapped in Gilgit during the blockade.170

On 28 October 2001 18 Christians were murdered and dozens more injured when gunmen fired into a church in eastern Pakistan. A service for some 100 Protestants was taking place in the Roman Catholic St Dominic’s Church in Bahawalpur, 100 miles south of Multan, when six men carrying AK-47 rifles approached on motorcycles, killed a police guard outside and entered the building. They locked the doors and fired into the congregation. According to the police “members of a banned Islamic group were under suspicion” and President Musharraf blamed “trained terrorists.”171 A new group calling itself Lashkar-i-Omar claimed responsibility for the attack. Its press release stated that

Lashkar-i-Omar has been established to inform President Bush of the result of the crusade. After the US attack on Afghanistan, jihad has become obligatory on Muslims of the entire world. Lashkar-i-Omar accepts the responsibility for those killed in Bahawalpur. This is just a small warning. Human rights organizations should now remain silent just as they are silently watching the bloodshed of Afghan Muslims.172

This area has been subject to sectarian violence between Sunni and Shi’a Muslims in recent years, and there have also been other incidents directed against the Christian


minority. In 1997 Christians’ homes were burned and looted, while 13 churches were ransacked following accusations that Christians had committed blasphemy against the Prophet Mohammed. Christians and other minorities have frequently complained of official discrimination in Pakistan, and argue that the blasphemy laws are weighted against them. Christians make up about 1 per cent of the population.

c. Wider implications

Members of Islamist groups which in the past have carried out attacks in Kashmir have fought with the Taliban during the current crisis. In late October 2001 eight fighters of the Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HUM) were killed in US air strikes on Afghanistan and returned for burial in Pakistan. Around the same time some 9,000 Pathan fighters made an attempt to cross into Afghanistan, in response to calls by the leadership of the Islamist group Tanzim Nifaz Shariat-I-Mohammadi (TNSM), but were turned back at the border. They were armed with a mixture of assault rifles, machine guns, rocket launchers, axes and swords. 173 They claimed that the Taliban welcomed their move, 174 but the Taliban later told them that they were not yet needed and would be at risk if they entered the country. 175 There had been several earlier reports of willingness among Pakistani tribesmen to fight in Afghanistan, 176 but the Taliban has been less than enthusiastic over offers of support from the ill-trained Pathan fighters.

In the past Pathans have been involved in other moves outside of Pakistan without hindrance by the authorities. In 1947 many thousands moved into Kashmir at the onset of the hostilities which led to the division of that territory, and in 1999 they were actively supported by the military under General Musharraf when they moved across the Line of Control in what became known as the Kargil incident. Currently the Pakistani regime is working to prevent any similar action, partly because of its support for the US military campaign and partly from concern over the possibility of casualties among the tribesmen, which might lead to a growth in support for the Taliban within Pakistan.

Some commentators argue that forces set in motion by past policies of Pakistani governments in relation to Afghanistan and Kashmir, as well as factors in the wider Middle East, have contributed to a ‘culture of jihad’, the life of which is not limited to any single conflict. According to one analyst who conducted fieldwork among Pakistani Islamists, groups such as HUM and Lashkar-e-Tayyiba

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176 Eg., ‘Tribal areas said supporting Afghan Taleban,’ Al-Akhbar (Pakistani newspaper), and ‘Paper reports Islamic groups preparing for Afghan jihad,’ Nawa-i-Waqt (Pakistani newspaper), in BBC Monitoring, Asia-Pacific, 9 October 2001.
pose a long-term danger to international security, regional stability, and especially Pakistan itself. Although their current agenda is limited to ‘liberating’ Kashmir … their next objective is to turn Pakistan into a truly Islamic state.\textsuperscript{177}

The 40-50,000 madrassahs (religious schools) play a not insignificant part in Pakistan’s education system, and many have been criticised for offering little besides religious instruction. Around 10-15 per cent of these espouse jihad, a route to fulfilment and status in a society which offers few opportunities for material advancement. Activities within militant groups can bring material wealth as well as symbolic status: Lashkar and its political wing, the MDI, are reported to have raised enough money from supporters in Saudi Arabia to consider opening their own bank. Leaders of the groups can earn considerable fortunes, middle-ranking officers can earn as much as seven times the average wage, and operatives receive salaries plus bonuses for successful missions.\textsuperscript{178}

Some of the operatives in the Islamist groups speak of their ‘spiritual addiction’ to jihad, and see the establishment of a Taliban style regime in Pakistan as their next goal after the appropriation of Kashmir from India.

Concern over the activities of Islamist groups in Pakistan is not confined to that country alone. The madrassahs train many foreign students, and the Darul Uloom Haqqania, from which the Taliban emerged, trains students from Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Russia and Turkey. The programme of the Islamist groups is not only anti-Western but also anti-Semitic. For instance, one leader of HUM reportedly cites discussions of Hitler among his favourite books, claiming that the Nazi leader understood that “Jews and peace are incompatible.”\textsuperscript{179}

3. Pakistan’s international relations

Pakistan has become marginalised in recent years, partly as a result of its economic decline and political turmoil, and partly as a result of its behaviour in relation to Kashmir and its nuclear weapons programme. General Musharraf has been relatively popular at home, but the backing which previous military regimes in Pakistan gained from the West has not been forthcoming. His cooperation over the campaign in Afghanistan may provide a basis for a more positive relationship.

In response to General Musharraf’s cooperation with the USA Mr Bush used emergency provisions to commit $100m in economic assistance to Pakistan. Congress subsequently passed legislation to waive in respect of Pakistan legal restrictions on the provision of assistance to a state where a democratic government has been overthrown by a military coup, sanctions imposed for violations of the Missile Technology Control Regime, and

\textsuperscript{177} ‘Pakistan’s jihad culture,’ J Stern, \textit{Foreign Affairs}, November/December 2000.
\textsuperscript{178} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{179} \textit{ibid.}
provisions restricting assistance to states which are in arrears in debt repayments. 180 Washington has also rescheduled $379m of bilateral debt and voted in favour of new IMF loans to Pakistan. 181

Secretary of State Colin Powell visited Pakistan and India in mid-October 2001. In Pakistan, he made comments on Kashmir. According to Jane’s Defence Weekly,

Powell, while walking a fine line on the divisive issue of Kashmir, was judged by Pakistani analysts to veer toward the Pakistani position by maintaining that resolution of the Kashmir question was ‘central’ to enduring peace between the two countries. 182

He said that Kashmir was an issue which

must be resolved through peaceful, political and diplomatic means, not through violence and reliance on force, but with a determined respect for human rights, 183

and spoke of “the beginning of a strengthened relationship [between the USA and Pakistan] … that will grow and thrive in the months and years ahead.”

After Mr Powell’s visit talks were held between Pakistani and US officials on what Alan Larson, Undersecretary for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs, called “meaningful, immediate and lasting debt relief.”

He [Mr Larson] said the United States is in consultations with Pakistan and other creditors to tailor a programme for Pakistan that fits its needs, interests, opportunities and its debt profile. He said the United States is trying to be flexible about the modalities so that relief is immediate, lasting, and has a sustainable approach to Pakistan’s debt. 184

182 ibid.
183 ibid.
V International Views

1. Russia and the Central Asian States

Russia continues to offer its support for the US-led military action, in spite of concerns over a possible long-term US presence in former-Soviet Central Asia, an area that Moscow has long considered to be within its sphere of influence. US National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice sought to calm such fears in an interview with the Russian newspaper, Izvestia, when she stressed that “[US] policy is not aimed against the interests of Russia. We do not harbour any plans aimed at squeezing Russia out of there.”

Russia has offered intelligence to Washington, but has ruled out any direct military involvement. In return for its support, commentators believe Moscow is hoping for a more sympathetic attitude towards its role in the ongoing conflict in the secessionist north-Caucasian republic of Chechnya. Other possible gains include greater support for Russian membership of the World Trade Organisation and closer relations with NATO.

Russia has increased its backing for the opposition Northern Alliance in the form of logistical support, arms and equipment. Following a meeting on 22 October with Burhannudin Rabbani, the head of the internationally-recognised government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, and his Tajik counterpart, President Vladimir Putin declared:

We confirmed the intention of the Russian Federation to continue supporting the government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan in the military-technical sphere. We confirmed our intention and announced concrete plans to help the Afghan people with supplies of humanitarian goods. The goal of the Russian Federation and its policy in the region and towards Afghanistan is to create such a situation in the country that the Afghan people will be given the opportunity to identify their fate on their own, to begin a peaceful life and build a state friendly to its neighbours, including the Russian Federation.

The predominantly Muslim states of Central Asia have adopted varying approaches to the current crisis. Uzbekistan moved swiftly to declare its support for US military action although the government has played down the role of US forces based in the country, claiming that the 1,500 US troops at the airbase of Khanabad will perform only ‘search and rescue’ operations. Some analysts believe this to be a euphemism used to obscure a wider role for Uzbek-based US forces, but attempts to report on the issue have been hampered by Uzbekistan’s tight media controls.

185 Daily Telegraph, 24 October 2001
186 For a more detailed discussion of Russia’s interests, see Library Research Paper 01/72, Section VII B.
Many Uzbeks are concerned that the conflict in Afghanistan could spill over the border. An ongoing insurgency by militant Islamist fighters of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) has caused instability in the region and tension between Tashkent and its neighbours. The IMU has close ties to Mr bin Laden and operates a number of bases inside Afghanistan. A large contingent of IMU troops is believed to be fighting alongside the Taliban regime and there is speculation that the Uzbek government has sought assurances from Washington that IMU infrastructure in Afghanistan would be included on the target list. Domestically, Uzbek President Aslan Karimov has imposed wide-ranging restrictions on suspected Islamist sympathisers, prompting concern among human rights groups, which believe the Uzbek government is exploiting the current situation to clamp down on any domestic opposition.

In late October the Uzbek government agreed to open its previously sealed border with Afghanistan to allow shipments of humanitarian aid. The port of Termez on the Amu Darya river is seen as crucial in this regard as it would allow the UN to ship significant amounts of aid into northern Afghanistan.

Turkmenistan has sought to maintain its neutral status, saying it would join the international anti-terrorist coalition only if the campaign were brought under UN auspices. In recent years the government in Ashkhabad has developed relatively good relations with the Taliban, which controls the Afghan side of the joint border. In return for an open border and some trade, the Taliban have refrained from hostile action against Turkmenistan. In light of its special position, Turkmenistan has offered itself as a base for negotiations to resolve the Afghan conflict, although there appears to be little international support for the idea.\footnote{See ‘Turkmenistan: Niazov ponders war options’, \textit{IWPR’s Reporting Central Asia}, No.72, 1 October 2001}

The situation in Tajikistan is perhaps the most fragile among the Central Asian states, due to the legacy of civil conflict between a Russian-backed secular government and Islamic insurgents during the 1990s. The Tajik population has strong ties with the sizeable Tajik minority in northern Afghanistan and the country plays a key role as a conduit for military assistance to the Northern Alliance. Tajikistan is also believed to be a key export route for illicit drugs produced in Afghanistan. Russian border troops continue to patrol the Tajik-Afghan border due to fears that instability could spill over into Tajikistan and the wider Central Asian region. As a consequence, the government in Dushanbe has adopted a more cautious approach than Uzbekistan, eventually granting approval for US forces to use Tajik airspace and bases in early October.
2. **Iran**

Iran initially condemned the US-led military action, arguing that any response to the events of 11 September should be conducted through the organs of the United Nations. However, there have been signs that, in private at least, Iranian officials were taking a pragmatic approach to the situation, giving approval for Iranian-backed elements of the Afghan Northern Alliance to collaborate with US forces and reportedly engaging in intelligence co-operation.\(^{189}\)

In recent years there has been a growing confluence of interests between Tehran and Washington, particularly on the issue of Afghanistan. Iran’s relations with the Taliban regime are particularly tense, due to its treatment of the Shi’a minority in Afghanistan. Iran has also been affected domestically by the instability in Afghanistan. There are around 1.5 million Afghan refugees in eastern Iran and the cross-border flow of illicit drugs has posed serious problems for the Iranian authorities.

The government in Tehran would therefore welcome the removal of the Taliban regime and its replacement by a government intent on promoting stability, allowing refugees to return and clamping down on the illicit drugs trade. Nonetheless, there is some unease among Iranian officials over the possible return of the exiled former Afghan king, Zahir Shah, a concept that has uncomfortable historical connotations for the government in Tehran.

President Mohammad Khatami declared on 24 October that: “We all should work to remove the factors from which terrorism emanates and develops. This is a step forward to destroy the bases of terrorism.”\(^{190}\) However, he cautioned:

> I believe that if the campaign against terrorism are led mistakenly, the situation may change to the benefit of the terrorists. […]

> We should not forget that violation of human rights, oppression, occupation of the territories of other nations, injustice, poverty and ignorance are the root causes of terrorism and a fundamental campaign against terrorism requires measures to uproot those causes.\(^{191}\)

Mr Khatami also voiced concern about the possible impact the current military campaign may have on the Afghan people and the humanitarian situation.

\(^{189}\) See for example, *Financial Times*, 15 October 2001  
\(^{190}\) Iranian News Agency *IRNA*, from *BBC Monitoring*, 24 October 2001  
\(^{191}\) *ibid.*
3. **Israel and the Palestinian Territories**

Tension remains high between Israel and the Palestinians after more than a year of sporadic conflict and unrest. The issue has emerged as a key factor in Washington’s efforts to build an international coalition in support of military action in Afghanistan.

There has been a marked increase in pressure from the Bush administration on both the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority to respect the cease-fire agreed in the summer and to seek progress towards negotiations. However, hopes of a decrease in tension were dashed on 17 October when the Israeli tourism minister Rehavam Zeevi was shot dead by Palestinian militants. The assassination of Mr Zeevi was the first murder of a high ranking Israeli by Palestinians for almost two decades. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) claimed responsibility, presenting it as revenge for the assassination by Israeli forces of its leader, Abu Ali Mustafa, in August. Mr Arafat condemned the PFLP’s move and pledged to arrest the perpetrators.

Israeli forces responded rapidly to the killing, occupying parts of Palestinian-controlled territory and carrying out raids on suspected militants. The Israeli government initially rejected calls from the United States to withdraw, although there were signs in late October that Israeli forces were beginning to pull out.

The events of 11 September and the conflict in Afghanistan have complicated the situation for the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat. The rhetoric used by Mr bin Laden calling for the liberation of Palestine was warmly received by many Palestinians, who are frustrated at the lack of progress in the peace process. There have been a number of violent clashes between demonstrators and Palestinian security forces, resulting in several deaths.

4. **Gulf States**

The US-led campaign in Afghanistan has caused concern in the Arab Gulf states, which have close economic and security ties with the West.192 There is believed to be widespread popular resentment over reports of Afghan civilian casualties, resulting in a spate of attacks on westerners in the region and an unprecedented demonstration in Oman against the bombing. Gulf leaders are anxious to maintain domestic stability and to reassure international business, particularly in the crucial energy sector, that the region is safe for foreigners.

Gulf leaders are also uncomfortable that Mr bin Laden has succeeded in highlighting the presence of US and other Western forces on their territory. As a result, the Gulf governments have adopted a cautious approach with regard to military action. Saudi

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192 For more background on the position of the Gulf States, see Section VIII D of RP 01/72.
Arabia has approved the use of a key command and control base, but was not asked by Washington for the use of bases for offensive military operations.\textsuperscript{193}

The exception in this regard is Bahrain, which has expressed its willingness to contribute forces to the US-led campaign. In an interview with the \textit{Financial Times} in mid-October, the Emir of Bahrain, Sheikh Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa, declared:

\begin{quote}
If a request comes that the Bahrain defence force is needed to fill a gap in this campaign it will be studied, it will be considered, it will be looked at. But we will not go just for the name. We have to have a clear mandate to go … a reason that people believe in.\textsuperscript{194}
\end{quote}

He added that no request had yet been made for him to contribute forces, and said he did not consider it likely given the “technical” nature of the campaign.

5. \textbf{China}

China has offered support to the USA. According to the \textit{Far Eastern Economic Review},

\begin{quote}
it’s obvious from what US officials say that not only is China offering moral and political support, but also, unusually, a degree of active cooperation. ‘The Chinese have been very helpful on the intelligence and information front,’ a senior administration official says.\textsuperscript{195}
\end{quote}

Commentators suggest that China’s approach is motivated by economic interests and President Jiang’s aspirations to great power status. There may also be security concerns: China and Russia have declared that Chechen and Uighur separatists “personify international terrorism and should be sternly opposed and crushed.”\textsuperscript{196}

President Jiang has made a significant move in keeping in check China’s sensitivities over the expression of US military power on its western border. It is likely that China will anticipate a more positive relationship with the Bush administration once the immediate crisis has passed.

6. \textbf{India}

India has shown concern that co-operation between the USA and Pakistan may harm its interests. According to the \textit{Far Eastern Economic Review}, India “wants the US’ war on terrorism to include a crackdown on the array of pan-Islamist groups engaged in a bloody war against Indian rule” in Kashmir. Following a suicide bomb attack on 1 October 2001

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[193] \textit{Financial Times Survey: Saudi Arabia}, 29 October 2001, p.1
\item[194] \textit{Financial Times}, 15 October 2001
\item[195] \textit{Far Eastern Economic Review}, 1 November 2001
\item[196] \textit{ibid.}
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
on the provincial legislature of the portion of Kashmir under Indian control, which killed 38 people, the Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee wrote to President Bush that “Pakistan must understand that there is a limit to the patience of the people of India.”

The USA has frozen the accounts of Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HUM) and has reportedly given private assurances to India that its concerns will be addressed once the current action in respect of al-Qaeda and the Taliban has ended. However,

India had hoped for much more, including a higher profile in the battle against terrorism and American pressure on Pakistan to end its support for the Kashmir insurgency. Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh’s early support for America’s war - with little to show for it - has left him open to ridicule.

One opposition Congress MP expressed these concerns in colourful terms:

For us, Terrorist No 1 is President Pervaiz Musharraf … For USA, Ally No 1 against Terrorism is the self-same President Pervaiz Musharraf.

Others suggest that India has much to gain from accepting that a US-Pakistan rapprochement is inevitable, but, in their view, unlikely to last:

A US-Pakistan alliance is thus tactical and limited in scope. For India, it is best that it remains on the sidelines for the moment. The most effective role it can play is one of quiet diplomacy, not to panic or take intemperate action. It must also consciously refocus on those aspects that make it more appealing than Pakistan: its educated society, open economy and modern outlook. Once the immediacy of the US campaign is over, India will find much sympathy from the West over Kashmir.

7. Japan

Japan has constitutional impediments to the use of force abroad. However, on 18 October the Japanese House of Representatives approved an anti-terrorism bill that defines a narrow role for its military in supporting the US attacks. The bill was cleared by the Upper House on 29 October. The bill authorises Japan to provide rearguard logistical support, such as medical services, supplies provision and humanitarian relief, but only in non-combat areas. It bans transportation on land of arms and ammunition. The new law is effective for two years and extendable for two more, and marks the first time that the self-defence forces will take part in military action in areas that are not surrounding Japan.

198 ibid.
VI  US and European Developments

A.  US developments

a.  Support for military action in Congress

On 14 September 2001, Congress approved a joint resolution authorising the President to take military action, with the Senate voting 98 to 0 and the House of Representatives 420 to 1. On 7 October, in what was described by the *New York Times* as “an unusual display of political unity”, the leaders of both parties in Congress issued a rare joint statement, endorsing President Bush’s decision to begin military strikes on Afghanistan. The statement issued by the Republican leaders, Speaker Dennis Hastert and Senator Trent Lott, and the Democratic leaders, Representative Richard Gephardt and Senator Tom Daschle, read as follows:

> We strongly support the operation President Bush ordered our military forces to carry out today. The administration has properly made it clear that today’s actions and any future actions are directed against those who perpetrated the heinous attacks on the United States on Sept. 11, not against Islam or the people of Afghanistan. We stand united with the president and with our troops and will continue to work together to do what is necessary to bring justice to those terrorists and those who harbor them.

According to the *New York Times*, “dozens of other lawmakers from both parties also issued statements supporting the president.” Senator Joseph Biden, the Democrat Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said: “The nation is resolute, and I have every confidence we will prevail”, while Representative Tom DeLay, the Republican whip in the House, commented: “The president can act with patience and deliberation because the American people are united behind our duty to vindicate freedom.”

b.  Public opinion

The latest *New York Times*/CBS News poll, conducted on 25-28 October and reported in the *New York Times* on 30 October, showed that President Bush’s approval rating, which soared after the events of 11 September, was standing firm at 87 per cent. Congress received an approval rating of 67 per cent, the highest since this poll began surveying it in the 1970s. Nearly 8 in 10 respondents approved of the way the President was handling the war on terrorism.

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201 See Library Research Paper 01/72, pp17-18
203 *ibid.*
204 *ibid.*
205 *ibid.*
While overall support for military action was very high, at 88 per cent with 8 per cent against, the poll also indicated that Americans were beginning to question whether the country could achieve its objectives in fighting terrorism at home and abroad.

c. Anthrax and other possible threats

The discovery of letters containing anthrax and other traces of anthrax contamination in Florida, New York, New Jersey, and Washington DC over the past month has heightened public anxiety in America. Since early October there have been three deaths from inhalation anthrax, the most dangerous form of the disease. Those who died were a photo editor in Florida and two postal workers at the Brentwood mail processing centre in Washington. According to the frequently updated CNN Factsheet on anthrax,\(^{206}\) as of 30 October there were six diagnosed cases of inhalation anthrax in Washington, Florida and New Jersey, and six cases of the less serious skin (cutaneous) anthrax in New Jersey and New York. There are currently four suspected cases of cutaneous anthrax and one suspected case of inhalation anthrax. A further 32 people are known to have been exposed to anthrax, most of them in the Hart office building of the US Senate in Washington. Many public buildings in Washington were closed for periods for anthrax contamination tests, and thousands of workers have also been tested.

Suspect letters sent from the United States to Kenya, Brazil and Argentina initially tested positive for anthrax, but were subsequently reported to have tested negative or, in the case of Argentina, did not infect the person who handled the letter.\(^{207}\) There has been a recent report in the Pakistani press that two brothers in the provincial capital of Peshawar have contracted anthrax, after their father received a letter from abroad, but it is said to be curable.\(^{208}\)

Investigations have so far failed to link the contaminated mail to Osama bin Laden or the al-Qaeda network, but the White House spokesman, Ari Fleischer, said that law enforcement officials were working on the assumption that the mail campaign and the 11 September attacks were linked.\(^{209}\) However, ‘senior government officials’ have recently told the *Washington Post* that the FBI and CIA think the anthrax attacks are more likely to be the work of US extremists, probably not connected with al-Qaeda. They say that evidence from the spore samples provides no link to a foreign government or laboratory.\(^{210}\) In a press briefing on 25 October, the Director of the Office of Homeland Security, Tom Ridge, reported that DNA tests showed that the anthrax samples from Florida, New York and Washington were from the same strain and had not been

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\(^{209}\) *Financial Times*, 24 October 2001

\(^{210}\) CNN.com/Health, 27 October 2001

genetically altered, which meant that they would respond to antibiotics. He noted that the
anthrax in the letter received in Senator Daschle’s office was highly concentrated and
pure, with smaller spores, which were more dangerous because they could be more easily
absorbed in the respiratory system. In response to questions, Governor Ridge said that
laboratory reports made it clear that “the terrorists responsible for these attacks intended
to use this anthrax as a weapon”, 211 but he was not prepared to comment on “the range of
potential actors who could have created as pure and as concentrated and as respirable an
anthrax as we are working on and investigating now”, saying, “I don’t know whether it’s
a large range or a narrow range”. 212

In an interview with the Sunday Telegraph on 28 October, the US Deputy Defense
Secretary, Paul Wolfowitz, said he believed that al-Qaeda would use biological or
chemical weapons against civilians, hoping for tens of thousands of casualties: “We
don’t know the origin of these anthrax letter attacks, but it certainly is a reasonable
assumption that they [al-Qaeda] have that weapon in their hands already”. He thought
that more extensive use of anthrax was just as likely as some other kind of biological
attack, “because so far it’s a horrible weapon but its distribution has been limited, and it
could get much worse”. On the possibility of a threat to the UK, Mr Wolfowitz
commented: “It would be prudent to anticipate that these murderers will attack the UK as
well, and more so because you are so closely identified with us”. 213 Mr Wolfowitz also
told the Sunday Telegraph that he suspected Iraq could have been involved in the current
anthrax attacks.

On 29 October, the US Justice Department warned that it had “credible evidence” that
further terror attacks on US interests could occur within the next week. The security
alert, issued to domestic law enforcement agencies and transmitted to diplomatic and
corporate posts abroad, was the second in less than a month: the FBI had issued a
previous alert on 11 October. The Attorney General said that the information received
was not specific on the timing, the type of attack or the targets.

d. Anti-terrorism legislation

On 24 October the House of Representatives gave its final approval, by 357 votes to 66,
to a bill containing a wide-ranging package of anti-terrorism measures, and the Senate
passed the bill, by a vote of 98-1, the following day. On 26 October President Bush
signed the measure into law as the USA Patriot Act of 2001, 214 which will give the law
enforcement agencies broad new powers to track down and imprison suspected terrorists.

212 ibid.
213 Sunday Telegraph, 28 October 2001
214 Public Law No: 107-56. ‘Patriot’ in the title of the Act is a mnemonic for ‘Provide Appropriate Tools
Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism’, which was the title of the House version of the Bill.
Signing the bill into law, the President commented:

We’re dealing with terrorists who operate by highly sophisticated methods and technologies, some of which were not even available when our existing laws were written. The bill before me takes account of the new realities and dangers posed by modern terrorists. It will help law enforcement to identify, to dismantle, to disrupt, and to punish terrorists before they strike.215

The passage of the anti-terrorism bill, within some six weeks of its initial delivery to Congress, was remarkably quick by congressional standards for such a major piece of legislation, and it involved intense bi-partisan negotiations. Some of the more stringent provisions put forward by the Attorney General, John Ashcroft, were dropped or diluted during the bill’s passage through Congress, including a request for the authority to detain indefinitely non-US citizens who were suspected of posing a terrorist threat: in the final version of the bill, such detention without charges is limited to seven days. However, the Washington Post commented that, in general, the legislation “closely tracks the administration’s request.”216 According to Senator Patrick Leahy, the Democrat Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

The bill that we have brought back to the House and Senate is a far better bill than proposed to us by the administration and a better bill than either body passed initially. We have done the White House a great favor by taking the time to actually read and improve this bill before passing it.217

The Republican Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, F James Sensenbrenner, commented:

I think this is the most dramatic modernization of prosecutorial and police powers that Congress has ever passed. […] I have been in elected public office for almost 33 years … and this is the most difficult thing I have ever done, balancing the need for modern law enforcement and prosecutorial powers with civil liberties.”218

The new legislation empowers law enforcement authorities to conduct secret searches of the homes of terrorism suspects, tap any phones they might use and monitor their use of the Internet. It also authorises unprecedented sharing of information between criminal investigators and intelligence agencies, and it strengthens money-laundering laws, in an effort to cut off funding for terrorist groups.

217 Independent, 26 October 2001
e. **Aviation security bill**

On 27 September 2001 President Bush announced a package of new airline security proposals, with a view to putting the federal government in charge of airport security and screening services, expanding the Federal Air Marshal programme, and providing substantial new funding for aircraft security modifications. The Bush administration favours an arrangement under which federal employees would supervise, manage and train all passenger and baggage screeners, but would have the flexibility to employ the best screening workforce, which need not be composed of public sector staff. There is opposition to this aspect from Democrats in Congress.

Earlier in October, the Senate unanimously passed a bill that would require all passenger and baggage screeners to be federal workers. In a recent letter to the House Speaker and in a radio address, the President has argued strongly in favour of adoption of the House bill introduced by Congressman Don Young, which would allow the government flexibility to use private contractors.

The House is due to vote on both versions of the bill on 31 October. Senior White House officials have indicated that the President may be prepared to use executive orders to impose new security standards, if there is an impasse in Congress.

f. **Biden plan for relief and reconstruction in Central Asia**

Speaking in the Senate on 3 October, Senator Joseph Biden, the Democrat Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, called for the establishment of “an international fund for the relief, reconstruction and recovery of Central and Southwest Asia.” This could be done, he said, through the UN or a multilateral bank, “but we must be in it for the long haul with the rest of the world”. He said that, “The initial purpose of the fund would be to address the immediate needs of the Afghans displaced by drought and war for the next 6 months. But the fund’s longer-term purpose would be to help stabilise the whole region”. He envisaged that all nations would be invited to contribute to this fund, and that projects for relief and reconstruction could be carried out under the auspices of the United Nations. Senator Biden called on the US administration to make an immediate contribution of $1 billion, with the promise of more to come, provided that there was international co-operation. Following a meeting with the President, he subsequently reported that he believed the administration would support large donations for long-term

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219 See Library Research Paper 01/72, pp20-1
221 US Department of State, IIP press release, 27 October 2001
222 HR 3150, The Secure Transportation for America Act
223 ibid.
On the day following Senator Biden’s speech, President Bush announced $320 million worth of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, which the Senator welcomed, while emphasising longer-term needs.226

g. **Presidential Directive to increase immigration safeguards**

On 29 October President Bush issued a Presidential Directive “to improve immigration policies and practices and make it more difficult for terrorists to enter or remain in the United States” and to improve vital information sharing between federal agencies.227 Key features of the Directive include:

- the creation of a Foreign Terrorist Tracking Task Force, which will (1) co-ordinate federal programmes designed to deny entry into the US of aliens associated with, suspected of being engaged in, or supporting terrorist activity; and (2) locate, detain, prosecute or deport any such aliens already present in the US. Experts from the State Department, FBI, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Secret Service, Customs Service and the intelligence community will serve on the Task Force.

- a thorough review of student visa policies, to institute tighter controls and ensure that student visas are being issued appropriately, with the aim of prohibiting the education and training of foreign nationals who would use their training to harm the US and its allies.

- improved co-ordination of immigration and customs policies with Canada and Mexico, in order to deny potential terrorists easy entry into the country, while ensuring that legal travel and commerce continued with minimal border restrictions.

h. **CIA operations**

An article in the *Washington Post* on 21 October 2001 reported that, according to senior government officials, President Bush had signed an intelligence order in September, “directing the CIA to undertake its most sweeping and lethal covert action since the founding of the agency in 1947, explicitly calling for the destruction of Osama bin Laden and his worldwide al-Qaeda network.”228 Officials are reported to have said that the President’s order instructed the CIA “to attack bin Laden’s communications, security apparatus and infrastructure”, giving the agency “the green light to do whatever is necessary. Lethal operations that were unthinkable pre-September 11 are now

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226 For more detail on the US humanitarian response, see p.56 of Section III C above.
227 White House Fact Sheet on increasing immigration safeguards, 29 October 2001
underway.”

The same article reports that President Bush has added more than $1 billion to the CIA’s war on terrorism, most of it for the new covert action. The operation is said to include what officials describe as ‘unprecedented’ co-ordination between the CIA and commando and other military units, and the President, working through his ‘war cabinet’, has reportedly pledged to dispatch military units “to take advantage of the CIA’s latest and best intelligence”.

A presidential executive order banning political assassinations was signed by President Ford in 1976, in response to alleged failed plots by the CIA to assassinate foreign leaders such as President Castro of Cuba. In 1981 President Reagan issued a further order, stating that “No person employed by or acting on behalf of the United States government shall engage in, or conspire to engage in, assassination.”

The President’s new order is reported to have wide bipartisan support in the Senate. The Republican Senator John McCain has commented, “The unprecedented aspects of what we are facing clearly, I think, warrant using whatever means necessary.” The Democrat Senator Joe Lieberman said that he was “absolutely comfortable” with the move, because

The initial executive order was in response to the abuse of the power that a government should have. It put us in a situation where it was okay to bomb from the air indiscriminately because we didn’t like what the leader [of that country] or a few at the top did, and not to target them. And I think that’s where the evil began.

B. UK developments

Parliament was recalled on 14 September, 4 October, and for a third time on 8 October 2001, the day after the commencement of US military action in Afghanistan. On 16 October, after returning from the summer recess, the Commons again debated a motion on the coalition against international terrorism. The Lords debated the same motion on 18 October.

On 4 October the Prime Minister informed Parliament of the evidence linking the perpetrators of the 11 September attacks to Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda terrorist network. He deposited in the Library a “document detailing the basis for our conclusions”.

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230 *ibid.*
231 Quoted in *CQ Weekly*, 15 September 2001
232 *Daily Telegraph*, 22 October 2001
233 *ibid.*
Mr Blair underlined the importance of the document but with a “major caveat”:

… much of the evidence that we have is intelligence and highly sensitive. It is not possible without compromising people or security to release precise details and fresh information that is daily coming in, but I hope that the House will find it useful at least as an interim assessment. The Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the Liberal Democrats have seen the full basis for the document on Privy Council terms. For myself and all other Ministers who have studied the full information, we have absolutely no doubt that bin Laden and his network were responsible for the attacks on 11 September. That was also the unanimous view of the NATO members who were taken through the full facts on 2 October. Much more of the evidence in respect of earlier atrocities can be released in greater detail since it is already subject to court proceedings, and this in itself is powerful.

He continued with an assessment of the links between Osama bin Laden and the Taliban, and their joint exploitation of the Afghan drugs trade to support terrorism. Mr Blair set out the immediate objectives of the international coalition against terrorism:

We must bring bin Laden and other al-Qaeda leaders to justice and eliminate the terrorist threat that they pose, and we must ensure that Afghanistan ceases to harbour and sustain international terrorism. If the Taliban regime will not comply with that objective, we must bring about change in that regime to ensure that Afghanistan’s links to international terrorism are broken.235

He pledged to keep the House informed of any US requests for military assistance “as appropriate”, but stated that the exact nature of discussions could not be revealed. He also emphasised the importance of the humanitarian coalition to help Afghan civilians: “The Afghan people are not our enemy, for they have our sympathy and they will have our support”.236 Mr Blair was confident that:

Three weeks on from the most appalling act of terrorism that the world has ever witnessed, the coalition is strong, military plans are robust, the humanitarian plans are falling into place and the evidence against bin Laden and his network is overwhelming.237

In the first parliamentary debate on the terrorist attacks the Prime Minister had stated that there should be no “moral ambiguity” concerning the events in the US. He said that nothing could excuse or condone the terrorist attacks. Military action undertaken by the coalition would be on clearly stated moral grounds: not for revenge but “for the protection

235 HC Deb, 4 October 2001, c673
236 ibid., c675
237 ibid.
of our people and our way of life, including confidence in our economy” and “for justice.”

The leader of the Opposition, Iain Duncan Smith, supported the Government’s position. He also asked the Prime Minister to “consider carefully the role that Iraq may well have played and any threat that it continues to or might pose as a sponsor of such international terrorism”, to which Mr Blair replied that the no-fly zones were still in operation in respect of Iraq and that Britain, with the United States, was taking action in policing them.

Mr Duncan Smith also emphasised the ethical basis for the anti-terrorist action:

> It is about upholding civilised values against anarchy and it is about defending good against the evil of terrorism. So today we should reaffirm our single and collective purpose in this House. No excuses can be made, no justification sought and no help offered to those who would carry out such deeds. Simply put, let right be done.

The Liberal Democrat leader, Charles Kennedy, expressed his party’s “full support for the Government's efforts to protect our own citizens and the interests of our military personnel … [and] to root out international terrorism”. He was particularly concerned that the Government should recognise “the overarching need to work within the broad framework of the United Nations” and that “gaining UN support on the strength of the evidence against bin Laden would help to reassure world opinion about the justice of impending military action”. Mr Kennedy was interested in the aims of the international coalition, whether any analysis had been made of possible political and humanitarian consequences if the Taliban were removed from power and what kind of regime the coalition was hoping to see established in Afghanistan. He asked what advanced planning was under way to deal with the growing humanitarian crisis, attention to which would help “build upon the sound strategic patience of recent days and help to build a better state of future peace”.

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238 HC Deb, 4 October 2001, c675
239 ibid., c676
240 ibid. c679
241 ibid., c678
242 ibid. c680
243 ibid.
244 ibid., c681
The Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, sought to clarify the aims and objectives set out by the Prime Minister and which had been a cause of concern during the debate. Overthrowing the current Taliban regime was not a primary objective of the US/UK action,

but if the Taliban continue to harbour terrorists they will be considered our enemy and will have to face the consequences. Whether the Taliban become a target is essentially a matter for them, not for us. That is underlined by the terms of United Nations Security Council resolution 1368, which speaks of all necessary steps being taken against not only the terrorists, but those who harbour terrorists.\(^{245}\)

Mr Straw also spoke about UK-US relations:

The close friendship between our peoples needs no further explanation today, but I will say that the truest test of friendship is in the hour of need. Twice during the last century, the United States came to Britain's aid; today, we have to come to the United States aid.\(^{246}\)

He said that the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, had been fully briefed about coalition action and that support in the Security Council and the General Assembly had been near unanimous.\(^{247}\)

The shadow foreign secretary, Michael Ancram, compared terrorism to a virus, the eradication of which would be “hard, long and not without risk, but the ultimate goal of freeing the world from the scourge of terrorism must be worth that hardship and risk.”\(^ {248}\) He sought reassurance, however, about standards in refugee camps for fleeing Afghans and hoped the Government would see that adequate steps were taken to ensure the basic dignity of the refugees.\(^ {249}\)

On 8 October, the third recall and the day after US military strikes began, the Prime Minister provided Parliament with an indication of the nature of the campaign ahead:

We are in this for the long haul. Even when al-Qaeda is dealt with, the job will not be over. The network of international terrorism is not confined to it. It is essential therefore that we reflect on why it is so necessary that we stand with the US and other allies in this fight. The attack was an attack not on the west or the United States alone. It was an attack on civilised values everywhere. It was an attempt to change by terror what the terrorists knew they could not do by reasoned argument. It was an attempt to substitute terrorist atrocity for

\(^{245}\) HC Deb, 4 October 2001, c689
\(^{246}\) ibid., c690
\(^{247}\) In fact all UN Resolutions had been adopted unanimously at this date. UNSC Res. 1368 and 1373 were adopted unanimously; On 12 September the General Assembly adopted without a vote draft resolutions on Condemnation of Terrorist Attacks in the United States of America, A/56/L.1 and A/56/L2.
\(^{248}\) HC Deb, 4 October 2001, c698
\(^{249}\) ibid., c699
deliberative policy; to see the world run by the chaos consequent on terrorist outrage, rather than by disciplined and calm debate.  

Iain Duncan Smith commented:

Last night, following weeks of careful preparation and planning, the alliance struck back. This was no knee-jerk reaction, but has been, as the Prime Minister said, a measured response.

Charles Kennedy was saddened by the military strikes but considered them ‘inevitable’ and commented:

If anyone doubted, even last week, the veracity of the case against bin Laden, the chilling nature of the words that he used in last night’s broadcast said it all, and mean that one does not have to see evidence.

In the debate on 16 October the Foreign Secretary informed the House of progress in the military campaign and responded to misgivings expressed by some backbenchers about the wisdom, nature, scale and duration of the action. Mr Straw said that:

few conflicts are resolved by military action in a matter of days. This was never going to be one of them. As both President Bush and my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister made clear from the outset, the terrain, weather and complexity of the targets mean that we can expect no early conclusion to this campaign. It will take months, not days or weeks.

Some Members suggested that, in preference to military action, terrorists should be brought to justice at the International Criminal Court (ICC), or at an international tribunal similar to that set up to try alleged war criminals from the former Yugoslavia. However, the ICC, once it is established, will have no jurisdiction over terrorist crimes. Mr Straw commented:

I know of no other set of choices lying between appeasement and military action. I have listened carefully to those who have suggested that there is some other way, and I understand why people are uncomfortable about military action - we all are - but I do not understand why, faced with the stark reality of either appeasing the Taliban and allowing them to continue to harbour terrorism, thus wholly thwarting our purpose, or taking military action, they keep dodging those choices.

\[250\] HC Deb 8 October 2001, cc813-814
\[251\] ibid., c815
\[252\] ibid., c817
\[253\] ibid., c1053
\[254\] ibid., c1057
The Liberal Democrat foreign affairs and defence spokesman, Menzies Campbell, stated that “Our moral authority for military action will be severely undermined if we do not fulfil our moral obligation to provide humanitarian relief”. His party’s objectives from the campaign were to:

- bring Osama bin Laden to justice; fracture the terrorist network over which he presides; try to remove the threat of terrorism wherever we find it in the world, and allow the people of Afghanistan a Government of their choosing.

In response to concerns over civilian casualties, Mr Hoon declared that “the possibility of accidents and errors can never be entirely eliminated” and that the Government would “continue to investigate any claims of civilian casualties very carefully.”

Some Members expressed doubts about the military campaign in general and the prospect of a ground war in particular. Paul Marsden was more direct in his disapproval: “we are dropping bombs and blowing up kids, and it should stop now”. Tam Dalyell said: “It is sheer cant to pretend that after nine days we are involved in effective military action”. Mr Marsden has pursued the matter of a parliamentary vote on UK military action through parliamentary questions and Early Day Motions. The role of Parliament when the Government decides to engage in hostilities involving British troops is discussed in Library Standard Note, Parliament and the Use of Force.

On 24 October a group of Labour MPs opposed to military action for varying reasons launched a movement called “Labour Against the War”. It is headed by Alan Simpson and includes Jeremy Corbyn, Tam Dalyell, Robert Marshall-Andrews and George Galloway. At its first meeting five key aims were agreed to unite diverse opinions:

- Unequivocal condemnation of the September 11 attacks on Washington and New York;
- Belief that military action against Afghanistan will not rid the world of the terrorist threat or create a stable international framework;
- Opposition to British involvement in the bombing, and support for alternative methods of defeating terrorism, including aid;
- Opposition to any clampdown on civil liberties or the right to asylum in the name of the fight against terrorism;

255 HC Deb, 16 October 2001, c1074
256 ibid.
257 ibid., c1138
258 ibid., c1139
259 ibid., c1071
260 ibid., c1092
261 See HC Deb, 8 October 2001, c829 and c823; EDMs 219 and 220, 2001/02
262 25 October 2001
Commitment to work for these objectives in the Labour party and union movement.263

On 30 October the Prime Minister addressed the Welsh Assembly and took the opportunity to try to clarify the objectives of the military coalition and reassure those uneasy about its consequences:

[People] realise the formidable challenges posed by any action in Afghanistan. They worry about civilian casualties. They are anxious about the refugee crisis as winter approaches. They wonder what comes after the conflict. All these concerns deserve to be answered. No one who raises doubts is an appeaser or a faint heart. We are a democracy, strong enough to have doubts raised even at a time of war and wise enough to be able to respond to them. […]

They lead to one inescapable conclusion: that if we do not act against al-Qaida and the Taliban, al-Qaida will have perpetrated this atrocity, the Taliban will have sheltered them, and we will have done nothing. We will have done nothing despite the fact, also inescapable, that they intend to commit more atrocities unless we yield to their demands which include the eradication of Israel, the killing of all Jews and the setting up of fundamentalist states in all parts of the Arab and Muslim world. […]

We will not stop until our mission is complete. We will not flinch from doing what is necessary to complete it. We will not fail and we will do it all because we believe in our values of justice, tolerance and respect for all regardless of race, religion or creed just as passionately as they believe in fanatical hatred of Jews, Christians and any Muslims who don't share their perverse view of Islam.

They mistake our desire for a comfortable life, living in peace, benign towards different races and cultures, for decadence. It is not decadence. It is progress and we will fight to maintain it. […]

But two words of caution. This is not a conventional conflict. It is not a battle for territory per se or for the subjugation of Afghanistan. It is a battle to allow Afghans themselves to re-take control of their country and in doing so to close down the threat posed by the present rulers. The political and diplomatic go hand in hand with the military. And we simply cannot and should not disclose the exact nature of the ground operations we intend to undertake. There is a limit to what we can sensibly discuss in public.

We do all we can to limit civilian casualties, unlike Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida who did all they could to cause as many civilian casualties as possible. Tragically, there will be some but I do ask people to be deeply sceptical about Taliban claims.264

264 Extracts from Tony Blair’s speech, The Guardian, 31 October 2001
He gave details of the humanitarian and diplomatic efforts being made in tandem with the military action. He reminded the Assembly of the terrorist action on 11 September and concluded with a call for unity “of all races and all faiths in Britain”.265

Mr Duncan Smith welcomed Mr Blair’s statement in Cardiff, but in an article in the Daily Telegraph he called on the Government to “win back our hearts and minds” in the face of unease in some quarters about the military campaign, which he felt resulted from media coverage of Afghan civilian casualties and “a confusing debate about when we will deploy ground troops”.266 He reiterated his party’s support for the Government’s war aims and for the air strikes, which were a “vital part” of the campaign, but said that they needed “to be explained more fully”. He concluded:

Some very difficult times lie ahead, but we should be sure of our aims and be ready to see them through. The threat of terrorism has become all too real, but the consequences of backing down in the face of that threat are greater still. The ultimate test of our values will not be the assault upon them but our readiness to defend them to the bitter end.267

a. British Public Opinion Polls

In a poll in the Daily Telegraph in September, 70 per cent of UK citizens thought the US and its allies should be prepared to take military action against countries believed to be giving aid and comfort to the 11 September terrorists.268 Since the military strikes began support is still high for military action and for British participation in it. A MORI poll of 1,016 people on 20-21 October showed that 66 per cent supported the involvement of British troops, with 28 per cent against. 68 per cent approved of Tony Blair’s response to 11 September with 25 per cent disapproving. The results of various MORI polls were as follows:269

| Q (Sep) If the United States were to take military action against those responsible for the attacks, would you support or oppose British troops being involved in this action? |
|---|---|---|---|
| % | 14 Sep | 21 Sep | 9 Oct | 18-22 Oct |
| Support | 74 | 73 | 72 | 66 |
| Oppose | 20 | 20 | 22 | 28 |
| Don’t know | 6 | 7 | 6 | 6 |

267 ibid.
268 ibid. 20 September 2001. See also Gallup Analysis, 20 September 2001
On 26 October *The Economist* commented:

Britons are often thought to be less sensitive to military casualties than Americans; but if the campaign is extended to include, say, Iraq, or there is a major terrorist attack in Britain, public opinion could shift. Dissent and unpopularity may also become problematic for the government if the conflict begins to have implications for domestic policy.270

A *Guardian/ICM* poll of 1000 adults on 26-28 October showed a slight fall in UK support for the military campaign to 62 per cent. 54 per cent favoured a pause for humanitarian operations while 29 per cent thought the bombing campaign should continue without pause.271 *The Guardian* commented:

Further evidence that it is a humanitarian-inspired wobble in public opinion rather than outright opposition to the war is shown by the results to the question on attitudes towards sending British troops into Afghanistan to take part in the fighting on the ground. Some 57% backed the decision announced on Friday for a small force of British commandos to be sent to Afghanistan. Some 29% disapproved of this decision, showing that there is only a small gap in British public opinion between attitudes to the bombing campaign and to use of British troops on the grounds.272

C. **EU Developments**

The EU response to the crisis since 11 September has included the following actions:273

- A common European definition of acts of terrorism and a scale of penalties
- A European arrest warrant to replace national extradition procedures.
- Uniform EU-wide standards on aviation security.
- Improvements in intelligence and police co-operation inside the EU and with third countries, especially the US.
- Strengthening co-operation to counter the threat of biological and chemical weapons.
- The freezing of over $100 million worth of assets of people suspected of terrorism.
- Measures to combat the financing of terrorism.
- Over 310 million Euro (one third of that coming from the EU budget) in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

272 ibid.
On 7 October the Commission President, Romano Prodi, issued a statement on the military action in Afghanistan, saying:

… all Europe stands steadfast with the United States and its coalition allies to pursue the fight against terrorism. We are united, and will remain united, in this struggle against those who attack the very foundations of civilisation. Our fight is not against religions or peoples”. 274

On 8 October the European Parliament President, Nicole Fontaine, made a statement on EP support for the campaign, emphasising that “large-scale humanitarian action on behalf of the Afghan population be undertaken at the same time”. 275 Parliament would, she said, use its budgetary powers to enhance EU action to this end.

The General Affairs Council (GAC) met in extraordinary session on 17 October and confirmed its support for the military action. It also expressed concern at the difficulties of access and of convoying humanitarian aid to Afghan civilians. The Council agreed five points on the EU’s future proceedings on Afghanistan:

- the establishment in Afghanistan of a stable, legitimate and broadly representative government, expressing the will of the people;
- the essential role of the UN in seeking a peace plan for Afghanistan;
- maintaining absolute priority for emergency humanitarian aid;
- a plan for the reconstruction of the country;
- the regional dimension of the stabilisation of Afghanistan. 276

The GAC stated that it would reinforce political and diplomatic dialogue with Afghanistan’s neighbours and with all parties in the Middle East peace process.

At the European Council in Ghent on 19 October, heads of state or government discussed EU anti-terrorist measures and the economic impact of the crisis on the EU, concluding:

We must now, under the aegis of the United Nations, work towards the emergence of a stable, legitimate and representative government for the whole of the Afghan people, one which respects human rights and develops good relations with all the neighbouring countries. As soon as that goal is attained, the European Union will embark with the international community on a far-reaching and ambitious programme of political and humanitarian aid for the reconstruction of Afghanistan with a view to stabilising the region. 277

274 DN: IP/01/1375, 8 October 2001, from: http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?p_action=gettxt=gr&doc=IP/01/1375[0]RAPID&lg=EN
277 Declaration by the heads of State or government of the EU and the President of the Commission: Follow-up to the September 11 attacks and the fight against terrorism, Ghent, SN 4296/2/01, 19 October 2001, at: http://ue.eu.int/Newsroom/
The Belgian Presidency expressed its support for the military action, referring to the evidence of the bin Laden and al-Qaeda involvement in the US attacks and of the Taliban’s refusal to hand over Mr bin Laden to the US Judiciary. The Presidency stressed that humanitarian aid was an EU priority.278

However, since the start of the military campaign, tensions have begun to appear in the EU coalition. The Belgian foreign minister, Louis Michel, has warned that there are “limits to solidarity”.279 He criticised Mr Blair for his “overly aggressive” rhetoric and said that Europe would not be led ‘blindfold’ into supporting any action.280 In Germany, the minority party in the governing coalition, the Greens, who wavered before agreeing to German participation in military action, have now joined in calls for a pause in the bombing.

Romano Prodi, addressing the EP on 24 October, re-called the spirit of Ghent and insisted:

Our first priority must be to act in unison. In my view, individual action taken by only a few countries is in the interests neither of the Union as a whole nor of its individual Member States, be they large or small.281

280 ibid.
VII Wider Context

There have been persistent reports in recent years that suspected al-Qaeda operatives have sought to procure weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. In an interview with Time magazine in 1998 Mr bin Laden declared that: “If I seek to acquire [nuclear and chemical] weapons, I am carrying out a duty. It would be a sin for Muslims not to try to possess the weapons that would prevent the infidels from inflicting harm on Muslims.”

On 25 October 2001 Channel 4 News reported comments from Western intelligence officials that al-Qaeda had procured unspecified nuclear material. It is difficult to judge the significance of such reports, given the varied forms that ‘nuclear material’ can take. There has been discussion of the possible terrorist use of so-called ‘dirty munitions’, which use a conventional explosive charge to spread radioactive waste material and contaminate a wide area. In 1995 Chechen rebels announced they had buried in a Moscow park a small device containing cesium-137, a radioactive isotope used in cancer research and radiation therapy. The device was uncovered and made safe by the Russian authorities.

The threat of terrorist groups gaining access to a full nuclear explosive device provokes greater concern. The technical challenges involved would make it extremely difficult for a non-state actor, such as al-Qaeda, to develop its own nuclear weapons programme without external support. It is perhaps more likely that a group like al-Qaeda would seek to obtain a pre-existing device or weapons-grade material from other sources, such as the massive ex-Soviet stockpile of tactical and strategic nuclear weapons. The poor security at many Russian nuclear bases, coupled with inadequate accounting of the ex-Soviet nuclear stockpile, has long been a cause for concern. Under the Co-operative Threat Reduction programme the US government has provided extensive funding to the former Soviet states in an effort to improve security and prevent proliferation, although the Bush administration had said prior to 11 September that it intended to reduce the budget for this programme.

Another suggested source for al-Qaeda would be the Pakistani nuclear programme. Analysts believe there to be a number of Taliban sympathisers within the Pakistani political and military establishment, a suspicion that was reinforced in late October with the arrest of several retired senior Pakistani nuclear scientists for alleged links to pro-Taliban Islamist groups. Pakistani officials denied there was any suggestion that the men had been passing nuclear information to the Taliban or al-Qaeda.

282 ‘Osama’s Endgame’, Time, 15 October 2001

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There has been speculation as to the source of the anthrax strain used in recent incidents in the United States. Some commentators, including the former director of the CIA, James Woolsey, maintain that Iraq was the source. UN weapons inspectors uncovered and destroyed elements of an advanced Iraqi biological weapons programme during the mid-1990s, although analysts believe parts remain intact.284

Reports suggest that key figures within the US administration favour broadening the current military action to include Iraq. The government in Baghdad has denied any involvement in the attacks of 11 September and in the anthrax incidents in the United States. Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz declared in late October 2001 that the US allegation was “not only baseless, it [was] also ridiculous”,285 adding that “If the United States goes ahead with striking Iraq this will be for US considerations, not for punishing Iraq for its acts.”286 He insisted that, while Iraq had developed anthrax in the 1980s, the programme had been destroyed in the 1990s during the UN inspections.

Some interest has centred on the approach of Ramadan, and the question of a pause in the military campaign. Mr Straw has responded to questions on this subject by saying only that the possibility is being looked at, and that in previous conflicts between Muslim states there have been no such pauses.287 Mr Hoon also commented that

We cannot afford to allow Osama Bin Laden, or al-Qaeda or the Taleban regime to regroup knowing they will not face military action in the course of Ramadan.288

He noted that the Taliban had not stopped fighting in previous Ramadans, and indeed the Northern Alliance has indicated that it will not halt military action during the holy month.289 Ramadan this year is due to commence around 15 November, depending on the exact sighting of the moon. Ramadan, a month of fasting and religious reflection, may bring an intensified sense of identity among Muslims, but peace is not in itself an obligatory feature. The Prophet Mohammed fought against non-Muslim control of Mecca during Ramadan, and there have been many other instances of Muslims using armed force at this time.

It may be that climatic changes will compel US military thinking over the coming weeks. It may prove difficult to inflict a decisive blow on the Taliban and al-Qaeda after the onset of winter in mid-November. If the campaign continues into winter, the ability to mount sustained air strikes in the mountainous terrain will be reduced. Ground forces,

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284 For a discussion of the Iraqi chemical and biological weapons programmes, see Library Research Paper 99/13, Iraq: “Desert Fox” and Policy Developments, 10 February 1999
285 Sunday Telegraph, 28 October 2001
286 Al-Jazeera TV, from BBC Monitoring, 24 October 2001
287 Radio 4 Today programme 29 October 2001; BBC1 Breakfast with Frost 28 October 2001
289 ‘Alliance to continue fighting during Ramadan,’ Interfax news agency, Moscow, in BBC Monitoring, Asia Pacific, 27 October 2001
particularly US and British forces, which are dependent on air mobility to reach their targets, will be similarly hampered. The Taliban would be able to use the winter months to regroup and resupply, increasing the likelihood that the conflict may continue until spring 2002 and beyond.

The British and US governments have warned that the conflict could indeed continue well into the summer of 2002 and may last indefinitely. During the Gulf War the air campaign lasted over four weeks, paving the way for a rapid ground campaign and the liberation of Kuwait. The air campaign in Kosovo and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia lasted 78 days before the Yugoslav leadership agreed to NATO’s demands. The US has argued that the success of the military campaign should be judged in terms of an accumulation of gains, rather than the achievement of a single military objective. As a result, the campaign may not be characterised by distinct air and land phases.

The Taliban has sought to play on the mythology surrounding the failed Soviet intervention and the Afghans’ reputation for invincibility. Were the Taliban and their foreign allies to withdraw to the remote, mountainous areas of Afghanistan, they may prove extremely difficult to destroy. During the Soviet occupation, Mujaheddin forces sought to avoid set-piece confrontations with the militarily superior Soviet troops, preferring instead to rely on traditional guerrilla tactics to wear down the enemy over time. US forces may encounter similar difficulties to the Soviets operating in unfamiliar territory against a committed and highly mobile enemy.

In an interview with the *Pakistan* newspaper published on 22 October, the Taliban’s military commander in chief, Mowlawi Jalaloddin Haqqani, warned the movement was prepared for a long guerrilla campaign:

> First, it is not possible at all that the Americans would capture important Afghan cities. But, God forbid, even if Kabul and other important cities are captured, the Taliban would not lay down their arms. Rather, we would take to the mountains and launch a guerrilla war.

> The former Soviet Union had also captured Kabul but then the world saw its nemesis.

> We have made preparations for a long war against the Americans. The Muslims do not depend upon weapons because their best weapon and might is in the spirit of martyrdom. We believe in Allah and He bestows us with victory. We have sufficient stock of the arms left behind by the Soviet forces as well as that provided to us by the Americans themselves. We have shifted all these weapons from our garrisons to the mountains. Let the Americans drop their commandos and you would see how many casualties they suffer.\(^\text{290}\)

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\(^{290}\) *Pakistan* newspaper, 22 October 2001, from *SWB Asia-Pacific*, 23 October 2001
However, analysts have highlighted significant differences between the Soviet intervention and the current situation. In contrast to the external support given to the Mujaheddin during the Soviet occupation, the Taliban has lost its only real state ally in the region, Pakistan, and may find it difficult to procure sufficient weapons and fuel.

Further, US officials have indicated that they have no intention of seeking to occupy territory, opting instead for brief incursions by ground troops aimed at destroying the al-Qaeda network and Mr bin Laden’s fighters. Perhaps the defining contrast with the Soviet adventure is that the stated aim of Operation *Enduring Freedom* is not to occupy territory, but rather to remove from power a small, if highly motivated, group of fighters whose battle tactics hitherto have been traditional and field-based.

Pakistan has been concerned over the prospect of an ousted Taliban finding sanctuary in its bordering tribal areas, and this goes some way to explaining its sensitivity over refugee movements and the security of the border. There have been reports that the Taliban is already preparing for a possible flight to Pakistan. According to *Tass*, citing Indian radio reports, the Taliban “is reported to be creating logistics bases in desert areas in neighbouring Pakistan’s Balochistan Province.”\(^{291}\) This would be for the purpose of conducting guerrilla operations against a future Afghan government, and the report continued:

> With support from Balochistan’s friendly population the Taleban builds military camps, helicopter fields, arms depots and hospitals [...] To earn greater support from local civilians and expand manpower reserves the Taleban opens new mosques, Islamic schools and medical facilities.

According to ‘an Arab diplomat’ this may lead the Musharraf regime to support the inclusion of moderate Taliban figures within a future political arrangement in Afghanistan:

> Pakistan is concerned about its own security interests. Its main fear is that if the Taliban are removed from power, they would turn against Pakistan. But if a portion of them could be saved, perhaps their anger would be more manageable.\(^{292}\)

President Musharraf has called for involvement by the UN and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in the process of facilitating a new government in Afghanistan.

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Japanese news sources in Islamabad reported him as saying that “political strategy can achieve the same purposes as military operations, in reference to the US-led military attacks against Taleban targets in Afghanistan,” and that

it is not realistic to exclude the Taleban all together from the new political system in Afghanistan, rejecting moves centred around Russia, among other countries, to totally keep out the Taleban.  

The sources also reported him as arguing that

while there are hard-liners in the Taleban, there are also moderates, adding that he does not support the hard-liners, but it is unrealistic and undesirable to eliminate even the moderates from the future framework.

Russia and Iran have both rejected the idea that the Taliban should play a part in a future administration, although this does not preclude involvement by other Pashtun groups.

There is a fear that neighbouring states such as Pakistan, Iran, Russia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan may seek to protect their own interests and to promote their favoured groups in Afghanistan at the expense of the long-term stability of that country. This could be taken as an argument in favour of the *Loya Jirga* proposed by Zahir Shah, in the hope that it might produce a purely internal solution, or it might be taken as an argument in favour of involvement by an outside player such as the UN.

Much comment has devolved on the subject of democratic freedom, and the argument that the military defence of that freedom should not preclude its verbal exercise. Globalisation theorists sometimes write of a ‘global civil society’ in which NGOs and multilateral organisations, as well as individuals and pressure groups, make use of international fora, satellite broadcasting and the internet to exercise freedom of expression in a non-national space. Some view this space with optimism:

the greatest virtue of openness appears to us to be in the marketplace of ideas. What that means, however, is not that all ideas have equal worth. Rather, that when ideas are allowed to be freely debated, the valid ones are reasoned out. The willingness by Osama bin Laden’s target nations to air his screed against America, Britain and others is a clear example that openness is alive. Rather than fear bin Laden’s and his associates’ threats, airing their intemperate views exposes their unreasonable hate and radicalism.  

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293 ‘Musharraf says UN, Islamic states should help create new Afghan regime,’ *Kyodo News Service*, paraphrasing President Musharraf’s comments, in *BBC Monitoring*, Asia Pacific, 28 October 2001.

Others might point to a need for critical discussion of the ideas expressed. Western governments continue to expend great energy challenging Mr bin Laden’s efforts to appeal to a pan-Islamic sensibility.

On the other hand, for states in the Central and South Asian regions, the future of Afghanistan is a matter less of identity politics than of concrete interests. The current campaign may be motivated by the protection of national security in the West, and it may have relevance to questions of democratic theory, but its impact may be measured in material terms across the region.
Appendix 1 – Bibliography

Parliamentary: debates on international terrorism since September 2001

a. First recall of Parliament Summer Recess 2001


HL Deb 14 September 2001, cc10-100. Lords debate on motion to take note of recent developments in international terrorism.

b. Second recall of Parliament Summer Recess 2001

HC Deb 4 October 2001, cc689-810. Debate on a motion for the adjournment on international terrorism.

HL Deb 4 October 2001, cc113-278. Lords debate on motion to take note of further developments in international terrorism.

c. Third recall of Parliament Summer Recess 2001

HC Deb 8 October 2001, cc811-902. Statement by Prime Minister, followed by debate on motion for the adjournment on the coalition against international terrorism.

HL Deb 8 Oct 2001, cc288-326. Lords debate on motion to take note of the coalition against international terrorism.

d. Resumed Session 2001/2002


HC Deb 16 October 2001, cc1053-1041. Debate on motion for the adjournment on the coalition against international terrorism.

HL Deb 16 October 2001, cc750-806. Lords debate on motion to take note of recent developments in relation to the coalition against international terrorism.
Deposited Papers


UK action plan on terrorist financing, Dep 01/1508, 15 October 2001.


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‘Sad and sorry picture (Terrorism and Middle East)’, R Hollis, The World Today, October 2001.


Books

ML 920 BIN LADEN 0-BOD

ML 303.62-LAQ

[On order]

ML 303.62-REE

America and political Islam: clash of cultures or clash of interests? F Gerges, 1999.
ML 327.56073-GER

ML 303.62-WIL
## Appendix 2 – US Forces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Forces Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Gulf/Arabian Sea        | **Carl Vinson Battle Group**  
                          | *USS Carl Vinson* Nimitz-class aircraft carrier and eight other ships including a submarine, two cruisers and two destroyers. The Vinson carries 70 aircraft including a squadron of F-14 *Tomcat* fighters. It is estimated that the battle group has a combined arsenal of 400 conventional *Tomahawk* land attack missiles. |
|                         | **Enterprise Battle Group**  
                          | Aircraft carrier *USS Enterprise* and 14 other ships including destroyers, frigates, nuclear submarines, support ships and US Marines. It is estimated that the battle group has a combined arsenal of over 500 conventional *Tomahawk* land attack missiles. |
|                         | **Kitty Hawk Battle Group**  
<pre><code>                      | Aircraft carrier *USS Kitty Hawk* and 4 other ships including *USS Essex* an amphibious assault ship. |
</code></pre>
<p>| Saudi Arabia            | Prince Sultan air base - 600-700 military personnel. Aircraft include: F-16 <em>Fighting Falcon</em> (Ground attack/interceptor), F-15 <em>Strike Eagle</em> (Bomber/air superiority fighter) F-117 <em>Nighthawk</em> (Stealth fighter/bomber) C-130 <em>Hercules</em> (transport), KC-135 (inflight refuelling). |
| Kuwait                  | 3,000 troops, tanks and <em>Warthog</em> ‘tankbuster’ aircraft. |
| Diego Garcia – Indian Ocean | US airbase with B-52 <em>Stratofortresses</em> capable of mass bombing or firing up to 20 cruise missiles. |
| Mediterranean           | Aircraft carrier <em>USS Theodore Roosevelt</em> with up to 80 aircraft on board is on its way to the Mediterranean. The battle group includes two attack submarines, the <em>USS Hartford</em> and the <em>USS Springfield</em> which can fire <em>Tomahawk</em> cruise missiles. The group includes 2,100 marines aboard a group of vessels led by the assault ship <em>USS Bataan</em>. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Incirlik airbase. Aircraft include: F-16, F-15, EA6B <em>Prowler</em> (Electronic warfare) KC-135, E3B/C AWACS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>Unconfirmed press reports suggest that US forces have deployed to the Khanabad air base in country.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Department of Defence, *Financial Times*, *BBC Online*, *The Guardian*
# Appendix 3 – Operation Veritas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Naval Vessels</strong></th>
<th><strong>Aircraft Carrier</strong> – capable of carrying a mix of up to 22 aircraft. Currently equipped with Fleet Air Arm Harriers and additional helicopters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HMS <em>Illustrious</em></td>
<td><strong>Type 42 Destroyer</strong> - equipped with the Sea Dart medium range air defence missile system, which in its primary role is designed to provide area air defence to a group of ships, although it is also effective against surface targets at sea. In addition to their role as an air defence platform the Type 42 Destroyers operate independently carrying out patrol and boarding operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMS <em>Southampton</em></td>
<td><strong>Type 22 Frigate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMS <em>Cornwall</em></td>
<td><strong>Assault Ship</strong> - Landing craft capable of carrying heavy tanks are housed in the ship's internal dock and are launched from the open stern. The ship can also operate a flight of assault helicopters and defend itself with the Phalanx automated gun system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA <em>Sir Tristram</em></td>
<td>Landing Ship Logistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA <em>Sir Percivale</em></td>
<td>Landing Ship Logistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA <em>Fort Victoria</em></td>
<td>Combined Fleet Support Tankers and Stores Ship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA <em>Fort Rosalie</em></td>
<td>Stores Ship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA <em>Bayleaf</em></td>
<td>Support Tanker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA <em>Brambleleaf</em></td>
<td>Fleet Support Tanker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA <em>Diligence</em></td>
<td>Fast Fleet Tanker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Aircraft**

Support aircraft - probably including Nimrod MR2 maritime patrol aircraft, E-3D Sentry Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft, Hercules transport planes, VC-10 and Tristar air-to-air refuelling aircraft and Canberra PR9 reconnaissance aircraft.

**Troops**

Royal Marines from 40 Commando have been assigned to the operation. The Marines will be retained in the UK at high readiness to deploy, with lead elements totalling some 200 men, embarked in the naval task group to offer immediate support if required.
Appendix 4 – Map of Afghanistan