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Beyond the Frame: *Alternative Perspectives on the War on Terror*

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NAOMI KLEIN

What are the challenges for activists post 9/11?

Well the most obvious challenge post-September 11th is the civil liberties assault, which is really an intensification of an assault on the right to protest, and essentially the right to dissent, that predated September 11th. And it has to do with an equation and a kind of bundling of activism with terrorism. And that is taking place with laws that are seemingly just sloppily written, but I think quite deliberately blurring the lines between legitimate civil disobedience and acts of terror against the state, and this is happening around the world.

One of the ways in which people have been active, forced their way into the global debate about what kind of globalization we want, has been to protest outside of summits. And one of the things that activists have done is they have brought blocked routes into the summits. Now this is very annoying for delegates. It's already illegal under law—it's everything from "a Public Nuisance" to "Obstruction of a Roadway." So the issue is not whether or not this is legal – many activists are willing to get arrested for their activities. The issue is whether or not it's a terrorist [activity], whether it's akin to hijacking a plane. And what these laws are doing is they're putting those acts of civil disobedience into the same legal category as hijacking a plane and putting much stiffer sentences on those acts. [And also], depending on the law, all kinds of rights are being waived—some of them with sunset clauses, some of them not—and if these activities are indeed terrorist acts, then that means activists are also losing their rights in court and so on.

So you have this legal bundling, where acts of conscience are being treated as terrorist acts, but you also have a kind of intellectual bundling of the anti-corporate position as being aligned with the terrorist. Now we have heard this over and over again since Sept 11th from various world leaders. In Italy, the Berlusconi government issued some statements on September 11th, immediately after the attacks. And this is a government that was facing a lot of scrutiny after the protest in Genoa about how they had handled those events. A protestor was killed by police; the police were always under investigation for that activity and others—raiding of activist centers, beatings of dozens of activists in the night. So the Berlusconi government seized on the attacks on the World Trade Center to say, "Look at where these positions eventually lead." Basically, they made a continuum of violence argument where they said that the anti-American, anti-corporate sentiments that we heard on the streets of Genoa lead eventually to these acts of extreme terrorist resorts—so basically somehow, even though there is no association, a kind of guilt by association argument.

We've also heard similar positions from Tony Blair's government. From Claire Short, his minister of Development, right before the last WTO meeting in Qatar, she said to a *Times of London* reporter, she said, "We haven't heard much from the anti-globalization activists since September 11th. I think that's because"—and she said this—"I think it's because they realize that their goals were the same as the goals of the terrorists." Robert Zoellick, the U.S. Trade Representative, has also talked about some intellectual similarities between the activists outside of the meetings and bin Laden and the Taliban and so on.

The other thing that's happened is that trade itself has been recast as part of the war on terrorism. Now, we've seen this personally when we're told that we should go shopping to fight terrorism. That's the sort of message to individuals. And it's the same message in a sense—but obviously on a much larger scale—that's being used, and was used, for a new round of

negotiations in Qatar, a new round of WTO negotiations, and to successfully ram through fast track. And the argument—it's a pretty sloppy argument, but it basically goes like this: the terrorists attacked symbols of America and American capitalism; therefore, they are anti-capitalist. Therefore, we fight terrorism by being capitalist—by shopping, by trading, by standing up for—basically it's an equation of free trade with freedom itself. And these arguments have been made very overtly. Bush went to China to an APEC summit a few weeks after the attacks and made the argument that part of fighting—this is the economic wing of the war on terrorism—and part of fighting terrorism means liberating markets, which then leads to liberation and democracy. And essentially the argument is that democracy is a trickle down effect of liberating capital. He made this argument in China with a straight face, but never mind that. So this is one of the challenges, and it's a huge challenge.

Focusing the Debate on Democracy

For starters, I think we need to say that bin Laden is not an anti-capitalist. There is absolutely no reason to believe that this man has a problem with capitalism; in fact he seems to be an arch-capitalist with an elaborate network of cash crop agriculture. He does things like—he will build roads to facilitate oil pipelines in Sudan and so on. The man does not have a problem with making money, and this is a kind of cold war template that's being imposed on a much more complicated situation. This is what we used to do to the Soviets, right. They don't like stuff, they want to take away our stuff; therefore, buying stuff and trading stuff is akin to fighting for freedom. And the parallel actually doesn't work in this case, so I think we need to intellectually take that argument on.

The other thing we need to do is refuse the definition of ourselves as anti-globalization and anti-trade, and to focus the debate as being fundamentally a debate about democracy. Because I think that what has drawn people into the streets since Seattle and before has been an understanding that these trade rules are violating our basic rights to self-government and self-determination. And nobody—or very, very few people—have a problem with trade. I mean there might be sort of a tiny sector of this movement that has an extremely nostalgic [idea] about only buying locally, but I don't actually think that that represents in any way the majority of the people on the streets. The majority of people on the streets are saying, “Yes we want trade, yes we want investment. But we don't think that we should have to trade away our democracies, in exchange for that trade.”

And the trading away of democracy in exchange for trade is not an overt kind of you-will-not-vote; what it's about is making democracy shallow, so yeah, you can vote, but fundamentally the profound decisions about one's economic destiny have already been made. And this is true for instance in France, in the farmers' campaigns, which are depicted in North America as being anti-McDonald's. For instance, Jose Bove strategically dismantled a McDonald's in Millau, France a few years ago, and this was depicted in the North American press as being “Oh yeah, French farmers don't like hamburgers; they don't like American icons.” But what was actually happening was that France had decided democratically—for reasons of food safety—that they wanted to ban hormone-treated beef. The U.S. didn't like this very much; they launched a trade war against France by putting very high tariffs on French exports, including Roquefort cheese. Now Jose Bove was a Roquefort cheese farmer, and McDonald's became a kind of surrogate icon for American trade policy. And that's why McDonald's was targeted.

And there are many parallels where the issue is not whether you want a dam; the issue is whether the community has been consulted about whether or not they're going to have this massive dam that's going to displace hundreds of thousands of people. So many of these campaigns that have really galvanized people, whether it's about a World Bank funded megadam in India, or whether it's about hormone-treated beef, or whether it's about chapter 11 in NAFTA, the issue is not trade itself, but what is being traded in exchange for that trade. So I think that that's the intellectual task of this movement: to say actually we're the ones fighting for democracy, we're the ones fighting for self-determination, and a promise of democracy as the trickle-down effect of trade or a trickle-down effect of shopping is absurd and demonstrably false.

Are you optimistic about the chances of democratic progress?

I am optimistic in the sense that I've been a part of this movement for seven years, and I've watched it grow so quickly from just being a few little pockets of resistance in schools, a couple of corporate campaigns against sweatshops to being this incredible global network. And I see this wave of activism being extraordinarily resilient, in part because it is so decentralized. And it has surpassed barriers before. I think where it becomes overwhelming is when we think about how much we actually need to do—that we have to fight these attacks on civil liberties, we have to fight explosions of racism. We have to fight this war, and we have come up with real alternatives because it's no use just saying no. We also have to start living the alternatives that we are posing. So that's what we need to do. And I think we know that there aren't enough of us to do all of this.

The reason why I am not pessimistic is because I believe that there are a lot of people who want better than this. I think so many of us feel trapped between these fundamentalist polls—the economic fundamentalism or neoliberalism and the religious fundamentalism that we are told, “If you're not for one, you're with the other: you're with us, or you're with the terrorists.” Bin Laden says, “Either the faithful or the infidels.” And I think intuitively most of us know that there are more than just two choices available. And I think that being the intuitive response is to actually say, “none of the above,” and to reject this polarization, and in essence to say—and I think we are hearing this more and more—that part of the problem is the arrogance of believing that you can fit the world into a single, one-size-fits-all model, whether that one-size-fits-all model is religious fundamentalism or whether that one-size-fits-all model is neoliberalism. I mean what they hold in common is this idea that you can ram the world and all of its diversity into its restrictive rulebook.

So in the face of these fundamentalist polls, I think there is an incredible hunger for genuine alternatives and an openness post-September 11th to the outside world, I think particularly in the U.S. There is coexisting with the xenophobia and the desire for revenge, there is also this hunger for knowledge, for understanding, because it was so, it seemed to so many Americans to come completely out of the blue, the pat answers—they're evil, they hate us, they want to take away our stuff. I don't believe they resonate; I think they ring hollow for so many people. So when I feel overwhelmed about the amount of fights we have to fight, I guess I take solace in the idea that the most radical thing that any of us can do at this point is talk to somebody. Talk to a neighbor, talk to a coworker, talk to a friend, somebody who maybe doesn't seem themselves as part of this movement but is feeling trapped and unsatisfied with everything they are getting from the media. And I think if we do that, there will be enough of us

to deal with everything that is on our plate.

From Global Symbolic Protests to Local Rooted Movements

Part of the reason why it has been easy for the Right to equate anti-corporate activists who are fighting the attack on the public sphere—who are trying to reclaim the commons from corporate power—with the terrorist is because the primary tactic for anti-corporate, pro-democracy activists around the world has been to use symbols, the most powerful symbols of corporate power, as our targets. Now that might be a corporate campaign that takes on Nike, or McDonald's, or Monsanto, or it might be a meeting where trade rules are being discussed like the World Trade Organization. Now this has happened for a whole bunch of complicated reasons, and those reasons still apply. A lot of it has to do with the fact that the institutions that allowed us to find other ways of resisting, a lot of them are in decline. Most of us don't actually work in huge workplaces where we can withdraw our labor for instance; more and more we have short-term contracts. We are very mobile, we lack roots, and . . . one of the byproducts of the economic model is rootlessness.

And I think that the kind of summit-hopping model has emerged out of this problem of rootlessness. When you have a base—whether it is a vibrant lobby of small farmers, or small fishermen, or a vibrant labor movement—when you are rooted, you have sites of resistance, you have power, and you can resist. Part of why we've seen this model of protest is because a lot of those bases have been eroded. Whether it's the attack on small farmers, and many people who were living on the land moving to cities, whether it's gentrification causing a huge amount of mobility within cities, whether it's the erosion of the work place and the rise of temporary labor, we don't actually have these stable institutions where we can resist in the usual ways. And for that reason these symbolic protests—this protest outside the meetings—have become extremely important. And I think they are going to continue to be important, even though it's possible that they will enjoy less public support. Because in a climate of fear just generally anything that seems in any way to be a threat to public order. . . if the police crack down on that . . .

I mean, speaking personally, we were doing a live work on the right to protest before September 11th—this was happening in Canada because we hosted the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City—and the government built a fence around most of the city, and we were able to organize academics, artists, even journalists to defend the right to freedom of assembly, the right to use public streets as a site of resistance. Post-September 11th, it is a lot harder to mobilize that kind of mainstream support because people are so fearful. And when people are fearful, the reflexive mode is to trust authority, right, to believe that you can trust the police, that you can trust your politicians, and fear is infantilizing. And an infantilizing process leads us to trust authority even against our better judgement. So I guess it's kind of. . . I don't think there is a "yes" or "no" answer to the question of whether or not we can continue to have these types of protests. I think we are going to continue to have these types of protest, and we need to do it all the more because of the laws that are being passed saying we can't. Now to not protest outside the G8 summit in a sense is to give in to the laws that are being written and rammed through that say actually to protest outside of a G8 summit is terrorism. So I don't think we have the choice in some ways.

But the other thing is we need to get at the deeper issue of how to build rooted movements. And I don't think you can talk about that without talking about how you build community, sustainable community, and how you think about what power means, now that some

of the traditional models of building power bases are in decline. In a post-modern, hyper-mobile, rootless society, where are our new roots? Where are communities? Where do we get our power? And you know I have the questions, but I actually don't really have the answers. I know that there is a really powerful, renewed interest in local democracy, in participatory democracy, and looking at cities and towns, municipalities as potential sites of resistance and more direct forms of democracy. And I think that's quite encouraging, but I think that this is in the very early stages. But I think that that's the seeds of the new movement which is a much more decentralized but networked model of a movement that is less focused on the mass conversions and more rooted.

From an Asymmetry of Compassion to Global Compassion

Well I have been really fortunate since September 11th to travel a lot—I think I've been into about nine countries, and I've also been to a lot of international conferences where there have been people from lots of other countries, so I have been exposed to a real range of responses that have really challenged my own responses. Because I am American—actually I have dual citizenship, I live in Toronto which is an hour's plane ride from New York—and I certainly had the feeling post-September 11th that everything had changed, that we had experienced something that had never happened before, and that everything about our movement was going to have to change, too. And that's the way it felt; that's the way it felt watching the attacks on television in North America.

So I think it was really healthy to leave North America, shortly thereafter for me, and to talk to people from Africa who said, "You know we're not saying this was an incredible tragedy, we're not saying that it wasn't a crime against humanity, but we live with terror everyday." And that helped me see the task more as a task of not engaging in a calculus of suffering—which I think is a real danger on the Left, to say, "Well, okay what happened in New York isn't so bad compared to AIDS in Africa, compared to the effect of sanctions on Iraq." People who are part of a movement for social justice are driven by an abhorrence of human suffering, so we should never be in a position where we are ever belittling a mass loss of life, like that which was experienced in New York and Washington.

But at the same time, I think that what we can do is try to reformat the discussions, so we say that compassion isn't a finite resource. And our task is not to divide up a finite amount of compassion in the world and say, "Well this tragedy deserves this much because x amount of people died, and this amount deserves that much more because more people died," but to somehow try to connect the human reactions to the tragedies of September 11th with the 6,000 daily lives lost due to AIDS for instance. And I think that if we open up our own hearts and don't let the injustice of the asymmetry of compassion blind us to our own human reactions to these tragedies, I think that we can begin to do that. There were other reactions, because there is anger. Because I think a lot of what enrages our planet is the asymmetry of compassion, and the reactions to September 11th, the media reaction in particular, have in many ways confirmed the message that so many people in so many parts of the world get everyday, which is that some lives count more than others—in some parts of the world, life is cheap, and in some parts of the world, it is just simply more valuable.

And this is also a media issue because we have global media now, but we don't have global compassion. So there is an assumption in a sense that we all consume the same media now, we all have McDonald's, and we all have access to Nikes, or we all watch Jennifer Lopez

movies, so we should all also mourn the same losses. And there was this rage inside the U.S. at the idea that in any part of the world people weren't feeling the loss in the same way, or even conversely that some people were celebrating. And there was incredible pain in the face of those reactions expressed in the U.S. and a total lack of understanding. And I think that that's a completely normal reaction. Of course you would be appalled by anyone who could be celebrating or not feeling such a terrible loss. But the truth is that that compassion goes both ways. And our global media is beamed to parts of the world where we don't reciprocate—we don't feel those losses, we don't mourn those losses, we don't hear the stories.

And it's not just about whether you see a bloody victim on a stretcher because that is actually the opposite of compassion—that's how you separate yourself from those victims. What makes you feel, and I think that we know this now after September 11th, what made us feel was not the gore, but the stories. It was the interviews with widows, it was the children, it was the narratives that we got on CNN and ABC, and I don't know about you, but for me that's what would really catch me off-guard emotionally. And so I think that we need to understand what it means to only see victims in passive roles; we may see it as starvation victims or people being pulled out of bombed buildings on stretchers. We don't hear their stories; we don't learn their names. So we don't actually reciprocate compassion globally. And I think that that message—the message of some lives count more than others, some blood is cheap—is what fuels rage at the United States, and the severe danger is that in our reactions, in our suffering post-September 11th, through the global media, we will reconfirm people's worst suspicions about the U.S., about this asymmetry of compassion, and that's what we have to be wary of.

MANNING MARABLE

The African-American Community's Response to Post-9/11 Military Action

You have to think about how historically the relationship between African-American, black folk in the United States was constructed. Before there was a U.S. Constitution, before there was a Declaration of Independence, before the American Revolution, before, even before the country became a country, America was constructed on a racial foundation. A democratic—so-called democratic institutions—were predicated on the Three-fifths Compromise of 1787, which framed people of African descent as three-fifths of a human being. The first law, passed by the Congress in 1790, was on immigration and naturalization. It said that citizens of the U.S. had to be “free white persons.” That is why Asians who were born in Asia generally could not become U.S. citizens until 1952. That is why American Indians, who are the only indigenous people on this continent, could not become citizens until 1924. The state is built on a racial foundation. Consequently, it has been the historical experience of African-Americans that the way we define democracy is not the way the government—or frankly the majority of white people—do. Our notion of democracy is expanding opportunity and the realization of human freedom and justice.

Many white Americans, however, think of democracy as freedom from government—liberty, individual choice—rather than collective responsibility and rather than social justice. And so, when the government engages in a war abroad against racialized populations, nationally oppressed groups, African-Americans, given our history, are very suspicious of the motives of this government and the principles upon which it is arguing its case to go abroad and murder people. So African-Americans, our response has been, even though it was, just like any other Americans—what we saw on 9/11 was tragic, there was a crime against humanity, it was. . . Any horrific, any use of violence against a non-combatant, civilian population is a crime, but it is not an act of war; it's a crime. And consequently, my argument was, and many African-Americans argued that, therefore, it falls under crimes against humanity where we have access to international conduits, the World Court, and the United Nations. The United States should have vigorously pressed its case in a court of world opinion and organized an international response to the problem that was presented by this right-wing, fundamentalist Islamic group, rather than unilaterally—or with the U.K.—carpet-bomb peasants in a country where we have not declared war against. So the take of African-Americans was quite different than many Americans who are not black.

U.S. Foreign Policy, Terrorism & the Threat to Democracy

I think progressive Americans have to raise the question[s]: Why are they so angry? Why would a handful of people using crude weapons deliberately kill themselves and hundreds of others, thousands of others in these horrific acts of violence? None of this is to justify these crimes against humanity and the horrific acts that destroyed so many thousands of lives, but it is to place it in a context in which we can have a frank political discussion. The United States is a country that, even though we have rarely experienced this kind of use of terror as an instrument of contestation, if not direct war. And people draw analogies between, parallels between, 9/11 and Pearl Harbor, even though one is a criminal act and the other was an act of war, an aggression by a state.

I think it's important for us as Americans to think about terror as a two-way street; that is, the United States on 9/11 in 1973 engineered a coup against the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende that led to the deaths of thousands and thousands of Chileans. The abrogation of democracy in Chile, death camps, and many of those thousands will never be heard from again, and there was never any justice against the regime and the architect of that fascist dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. So that the United States was the architect of all that; we created all that. The same kind of support the United States had for Mubutu in Zaire. The same kind of support we have had for right-wing regimes all over the world throughout the twentieth century. And so, our culpability in the use of terror transcends anybody else on the planet.

The world of terror is an instrument of U.S. foreign policy; it's perhaps clearest and most fundamental over the last few years in the anti-apartheid trouble in the 1970s, and 80s, and 90s. That in Africa, the United States' policy was to deliberately support terror—the use of armed violence against civilian populations. That's what RENAMO was in Mozambique, that's what UNITA was, and is, in Angola, that's what Inkatha—the Zulu, right-wing force—was in the use of tools of violence against civilian populations who were loyal to the ANC (the African National Conference). So, we first have to ask the question, “What is the government's role in fostering terror?” And, . . . on a moral plane, Osama bin-Laden, and Henry Kissinger, and Augusto Pinochet—there is no difference. So that would be the first point we make.

The second point is: Why are people so angry? Well, the United States, for starters, had about five or six thousand U.S. troops stationed in Saudi Arabia. For devout Muslims—this is prior to 9/11—for devout Muslims, this is deeply offensive to have U.S. troops stationed in the country that gave birth to Islam, so that's one issue. The second contradiction clearly is Israel and Palestine. The opinion throughout most of the rest of the world is that Israel—backed by three and a half billion dollars a year, subsidized by the U.S.—is carrying out policies that abrogate human rights and have destroyed the lives of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian people, millions of Palestinian people. So the contradiction that Israel represents in its refusal to negotiate in good faith with the Palestinian people or recognize self-determination of Palestine, that's a second contradiction. But perhaps the greatest contradiction is the United States' support for the mujahaddin in the 1980s against the Soviet Union and the fact that the U.S. pumped three billion dollars and the Saudis five billion dollars to create the groups that clustered and became, ultimately, the current regime, the former regime that existed in Afghanistan. The al-Qaeda network emerged out of that right-wing reactionary, fundamentalist Islamic politics that the United States supported for so many years.

Why do people hate us? We created the context in which these right-wing regimes emerged and used tools of terror against millions of people globally. And so, the way that I like to think about it, we need to explain to the American people that the twenty-first century actually begins in the year 2001 with two events: the Durban Conference Against Racism; and the attack against the World Trade Center, the events of 9/11. The third world is attempting to renegotiate its relationship in the period of globalization, in a period of a unipolar world where corporate capitalism and transnational capital define the economics, the political economy of the globe. The third world was trying in Durban to renegotiate the issues of structural adjustment, reparations, economic underdevelopment through the use of diplomacy. In this instance, at the World Trade Center, the effort by the third world was to renegotiate through the use of terror. The issues that confront the American people that we have to think about [are] the role of the U.S. using terror abroad as a normal tool of diplomacy and hegemony and the broader

responsibility we have to reengage in creating a democratic discussion across this planet about the utilization of resources and human development universally. And until and unless we face that fact, there will be more acts of terror—as horrific as they are and as unjustifiable as they are—the moral and political bankruptcy of the use of terror. And I think the left has to be very clear about this; we must condemn these acts, and, at the same time, we must explain to the American people that the role of our government is making us, and the way they responded to 9/11 makes our lives, less safe, puts our lives in greater jeopardy because of the actions we have taken since 9/11, and that to fight for peace within the framework of the new dialogue for global justice is the only way we will keep our cities safe.

Peace & Global Social Justice

Well, in the movement for progressive change, various movements, we'd like to say that there's a relationship between peace and justice—because without justice there can be no peace. It sounds good, but we should really think about the practical implications of our own concentra. Justice—the struggle to realize the full potential of every human being, of every woman and man on this planet—is structurally denied the vast majority of human beings because of the unequal allocation of resources; that's just a fact. If you think about the six billion, 6.1 billion people, on the planet and if you think metaphorically, or symbolically rather, of that six billion people being a village of a thousand, about sixty people in that village of a thousand would control more than half of the material resources of the village. About 350 or 400 people would be illiterate, about 400 would be in poor health, about half would die before they reached the age of forty. You have a global village where there is extreme inequality, and the vast majority of people in that sixty out of the one thousand are white males in North America and in Europe. And so both at the gender level and a racialized level and at the level of nationality, you have profound degrees of discontent that are part of the structure of power and resources. And until we talk about a democratic transformation of the global structure of capital, until we talk about what a democracy at a global level looks like, and global solutions to global problems, we will always have the contradiction of terror, because terror is the tool of the weak.

But it is also the tool—and I think this is the paradox—it is the favorite tool of U.S. foreign policy. But it is also primarily and fundamentally the tool of the weak. Because box cutters can, and have, changed the course of history, and not just neutron bombs, and not just cruise missiles, or Star Wars. So, Third World countries are demanding a re-negotiation. The American people—representing 5% of the global population, but utilizing 25% of resources, at least 25%, probably more—we have material interest in denying the rest of the world to engage in that kind of discussion. And until and unless we see ourselves as members of a global community, there will always be this fear and there will always be this contradiction. It is difficult to get people who benefit from white privilege in a racist society to change up; it just is. But change up they must. Capitalism as an economic system is a lot like poker; it's a zero-sum game. There are winners and losers. There are a group of winners, and there are a whole lot of losers. When you play poker, everybody doesn't get up at the end of the game with more money. It doesn't happen that way. The utilization of resources for the accumulation of wealth and a re-allocation of that wealth into private hands, driven by markets, is a tool of inequality. That is inescapably true.

And what is behind the debate about the Mideast and what's behind the Afghanistan debate is really a question of politics and power. As the vast majority of humankind have the

right to claim for itself prerequisites for decent life: clean water, food, shelter—not a mansion or a palace, but shelter—clean, affordable shelter, decent health care. What will it take, at a global level, on an international scale, to realize those objectives for human development? When there is the human possibility of justice—material and economic justice—then peace can flourish. But without that justice, there will be no peace. Sounds simple; it’s hard to create. It’s hard to realize. Yet those are the options, and that’s how we should, as progressives, frankly talk to the American people. The story we have to stay is a story that puts us on the side of humankind. That’s not usually where the United States has been. But that’s where the country needs to go. And we have to have courage to make that case.

History & the Threat to Civil Liberties

If you look at American History—throughout the years from the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 and ’99 that were imposed by the administration of John Adams, to the elimination of Habeas Corpus by Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War, to the Palmer Raids that occurred in 1919 and 1920 by the Attorney General in the Wilson Administration in the aftermath of World War I in their effort to uproot Bolshevism, to the repression of the Communist party during the Cold War, where states like Tennessee made membership in the Communist party a capital crime, you could be put to death for your ideas—that’s a history of the abrogation of civil rights and civil liberties that has now come to the fore again. This is a tradition within America’s truncated and very narrow notions of democratic rights what democracy is. And that’s part of the reason that African-Americans have been most critical of this war and why Barbara Lee was the only person in Congress who took a stand against it. Because we know that their definition of democracy is so shallow and so limited and full of contradictions that they are willing to shelve democratic rights at any moment when their material or political interests come into conflict with the concept of democratic freedom. And that’s what we’ve seen since 9/11.

We’ve seen the Congress of this country herded en masse to embrace a reactionary body of legislation that was unimaginable, even six months ago. We saw the state legislature of New York in the assembly vote 135 to 5 for a whole series of punitive measures against the crime of terrorism, that engaging in a terrorist act in New York state is a capital offense. Supporting a group that the State Attorney General finds on the list of terrorist organizations—giving \$1000 or more to such a “terrorist” group—is a criminal offense that could put you in jail for five to seven years. Now, when you think about the fact that it was not too long ago that the African National Congress was defined by our government as a terrorist organization, when you think about the Southwest African People’s Organization (SWAPO), when you think about Falimo in Mozambique, when you think about liberation movements in El Salvador and Nicaragua and the Sandinistas, if you think about the U.S. role in Grenada in the New Jewel Movement—all defined as “terrorist”—you see the great danger to civil liberties and to the pursuit of legal justice in this country through this Ashcroft-initiated abrogation of civil liberties. The Democratic Party has, almost to a person, capitulated en masse to this offense against civil liberties. And I think that history—we’re not surprised at what George W. Bush does, we’re not surprised at who Ashcroft was. That’s how come black folk in Missouri in 2000 turned out in record numbers to vote for the dead guy against Ashcroft. We knocked him out of the Senate, but Bush then put him in charge of our legal system. Ashcroft and Bush are acting the way they do because they believe in a reactionary body of politics. The Democratic Party, which ostensibly represents the alternative, represents no alternative. And so the real challenge for progressives,

and left-of-center politics, in this country is to re-frame the politics of the possibilities of a left politics that transcend this kind of Tweedledum and Tweedledee framing of issues. And that's a real problem for us, and I think the only way that we can begin to address that is to focus on real, concrete issues that have touched people's lives. The fact that there's something profoundly dangerous where you can use secret information to indict people, where there are thousands of people being held by the security apparatuses of our government who have not been charged with any crime—whether they are documented immigrants or undocumented immigrants really doesn't matter a whole lot, because in the last analysis, the chickens will come home to roost. [If] you destroy the democratic rights for some residents in the country, [then] you will inevitably restrict the democratic rights of others who are citizens. And so these are the kinds of issues that are concerns we need to raise with the American people.

9/11 & Discussing Democracy

Everyone says everything has changed [since 9/11]. In some senses, that's correct, and in others, you're reminded of the expression "The more things change, the more they stay the same." Here in New York, there was this tremendous outpouring of civic pride. And New Yorkers like to think of themselves as living in the capital city of the world. And in a way that's true, in the sense that the world is in this city. And that from the music, and the tastes, and the food, and the smells, and the cacophony of languages and religions and ethnicities, it is an extraordinary place. And the pain and the damage that occurred on 9/11 was so terrible, and it touched so many people's lives in this city, that it gave people a sense of coming together as a single community. But this as a community—the whole notion of a unified city—through pain and perseverance, is a lie and an illusion.

Within this city, where we are taping this right now, we are several blocks from the center of Harlem, 125th street. According to the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the typical black person—black man—who is born and raised in central Harlem, has a life expectancy of forty-nine years of age, lower than in Bangladesh. That in this city, if you look up the upper twentieth percentile of income earners and the bottom twentieth percentile of income earners, the people in the top twentieth percentile earn twenty times the annual salaries of the people at the bottom. Some of the economic extremes in this city are nothing less than obscene. It's about twenty blocks between the Upper East Side and East Harlem, yet in the Upper East Side, in the 1990s, the typical household income was about \$300-350,000. In East Harlem, it's about \$10,000 a year. So, you've got a tale of two cities.

The vast majority of the people who died on 9/11, at the World Trade Center, were working people. They weren't the wealthy, the rich—only 4% of those who died were stock brokers. The vast majority. . .there were at least a thousand undocumented immigrants. There were hundreds of Muslims, perhaps as many as nine hundred. The vast majority of the people who died in the hotels and in that neighborhood. . . the vast majority of the small businesses were run by people of color and immigrants, and people who worked as maids and security guards. These were the tragic victims of 9/11, and the tragedy continues. Take a look and see the response of the United States government, the promise of \$20 billion, Congress recently renegeing on their promise. The vast majority of the wealthy and powerful in this city held private insurance that guaranteed that they would be repaid for their loss of physical damages, but the vast majority of working people who got thrown out of work in the city—about 100,000 people—the vast majority of them are black, and brown, and working, and poor people, and

there is no government agency that will help them. So that part of that tragedy is a tragedy that speaks to the class and racial and gendered stratification of the country and of the city.

And for progressives, it offers us the opportunity to interrogate this tragedy, but in a way of opening up a discussion about what is real democracy in this country and the lack of it. And, as terrible as the personal tragedies were of the firefighters, and the police officers who perished, and others in emergency organizations who died in the flames of this fire, the people who took the real hit, in terms of the large numbers of them, were working and poor people, and brown and black people, and immigrants in this city. In the businesses that shut down in Chinatown, in the small business loans that are not going to minority vendors, all of those kinds of issues can be part of the grist of the discussion that we need to engage in around what were the real costs of 9/11. And so in that sense, nothing has changed, except the opportunity for us to raise the issues that must be raised to make the United States a genuine democracy, the democracy it has never been.

RABBI ASCHERMAN

How has Sept. 11 affected your work?

It has changed things because it's perhaps made some of our supporters abroad, in some cases, maybe a little bit less enthusiastic about supporting an organization which supports Israeli human rights and works for economic issues inside Israel, but also spends a great deal of energy working on Palestinian rights. But thank God that has not really seemed to be the case. It has changed our work insofar as the Israeli government. On the one hand, [the government] has tried to use the cover of "International War on Terror" to justify increasingly militant action against Palestinian authority. And on the reverse side, the United States coming in and saying, "Do as I say, not as I do. And we're going to attack Afghanistan, but you have to act with restraint." So, in that sense, it has played into the issues that we deal with, but the basic issues have not changed.

And if you look at the people speaking out one way or another about the September 11th and post September 11th reality, it's very interesting. You kind of have two groups. You have the people that just keep on talking about the dangers of Islamic fundamentalism and need to stamp out Islamic fundamentalism and the need for Islamic leaders to get up and say, "This is not Islam." If some of the people who are more sophisticated will also talk about that there are other ayaldis in the world beyond Islam that also lead to terror sometimes. And then you have your other group of people that speaks only about the fact that there is oppression and poverty in the Third World in particular, and the role of the United States in creating this hatred, and that we have to address that. The fact is, of course, that they are both true. That there are places where there are terrible poverty and oppression, and they've got some globalization where people don't turn to terror. And it is unquestionably true that without the effects of globalization and the poverty which it creates and the despair that it creates, the people proposing and putting out these kind of ideologies would not find anybody to buy into them. So the fact is that both of those things are true, and that a truly sophisticated approach which generally wants to create a better world and not just score propaganda points will have to deal with both of those.

And in the same way that on the ground in our neck of the woods, we [need to say to] the Palestinians that terror is wrong, and to our fellow Israelis that we have to take responsibility for these human rights violations which we are perpetrating, which drive people to the explosion points. Right now we see a very dangerous media game, because we have people in Israel who are just out and out calling for the destruction of the Palestinian authority, for reoccupation of everything that has become areas A or B. But then you have the more subtle way of going about things, whereby you create provocations every time things seem to be quieting down a little bit in the territories. It just seems that our army does another assassination or another incursion into area A, which stirs things up again, and Palestinian leaders have been behind the scenes saying to Israeli leaders, "If Arafat is going to have any chance of reigning in terror—and it is questionable right now if he has the authority to do that—but he will need some kinds of gestures from the Israeli side to say to the Palestinian people, 'We have something to gain out of this.'"

And so the current Israeli government is not going to give any of those gestures, holding Arafat personally responsible for every act of terror when his authority is actually waning. But to acknowledge that the talk about responsibility by Hamas leaders or Islamic Jihad leaders would give some strength to the argument that to rather than further attacks on Palestinians after a terror attack that in fact the people doing these terror attacks are people—the Palestinian

extremists who know that the Israeli extremists want to stop the peace process—and that actually you're allowing them to play us like a virtuoso violinist to make sure that we never get on track because they know that one person with a bomb or a rifle can bring the whole thing to a halt. And so this is collusion, which will allow eventually people to cry crocodile tears and say, “We so much wanted peace, we were willing to do this and that, and look the Palestinians just couldn't get their act together.” And that will be the message that will be put out through the Israeli and the international media, which, like I said, does not for a moment excuse or make light of Palestinian terror, but it just shows how extremists on both sides have a very convenient collusion to perpetuate this, to avoid the very dangerous possibility that we might actually return to a peace process.

What will it take to break the cycle of violence in Israel/Palestine?

First of all, I should mention that on Sept. 17th, on the eve of Roshashanah, in *Ha'aretz*—a newspaper in Israel—there was a very interesting article by Akiva Eldar in which he quoted Ami Ayalon, who is one Barak's top advisors. And he basically [said that] the Barak government created the myth that Arafat planned the intifada when he came home from Camp David and didn't get what he wanted. He really used that kind of language, and this was one of the people that was there doing the policy making, created the myth. Yes, once the intifada started, Arafat could've, and should've, done more to stop the violence. He chose to ride the tiger, and now the tiger is riding him. But the reality on the ground is that actions speak louder than words. Your average Palestinian had ... we are increasingly over the years, this is not a peace process.

Because on the ground, a parallel to what the leaders were talking about—who had become so many talking heads as far as the average Palestinian was concerned—you had ongoing land expropriation, tree uprootings, road building, settlements were being expanded at a quicker pace under Barak than they had under Netanyahu. Unfair [resource] allocation by which many Palestinians in the summer and fall have approximately two hours of running water a week when next door you can have a settlement with green lands and a swimming pool. So what are people suppose to think? Rightly or wrongly. This is said to people. This is not a peace process—even if it is, by the time it is concluded, everything I have is going to be gone, going to be expropriated. So what's in it for me?

And this is really important, because someday, we're going to get back to the negotiations, I don't know when. I'm usually an optimist, but right now, I fear we are looking at a five to ten year cycle of violence before both sides get tired of killing each other. But someday it's going to happen, and the question will be *What did we learn? Have we learned what we needed to learn so we'll do a better job of it the next time around?* First of all, we're not going to do a better job next time around if Palestinians don't learn that terror does not create the right atmosphere for negotiations. In other words, opinion polls show that even among those Palestinians who believe in negotiated settlements—and that number has gone down from 70% from the beginning of this intifada to maybe 45,46% today, so for some strange reason, when you're being shot at your positions pardon—but those same people also believe that a negotiation will only be successful if it is combined with intifada.

So where the Israeli mantra is “no negotiation under fire”—which is problematic in certain ways, when one person with a gun can bring this whole process to a screeching halt—the Palestinian mantra, which is also problematic, is “negotiation only under fire.” So Palestinians

are going to need to learn that terror does not create the right atmosphere for peace. And Israelis have to learn that you cannot negotiate peace on one hand—no matter how generous your offers may be—and violate human rights on the other hand. That does not create the atmosphere for a successful peace process. So if someday, we are going to get back to the process as we will, if we're going to do any better job of it the next time around, we absolutely must debunk this whole idea that the intifada was Arafat's plan get what he wanted at Camp David.

The message that we try to convey is [that] although we are quite clear that we condemn Palestinian violence, people of course have to understand that this is not a symmetrical relationship. Yes, Israeli and Palestinian violence [are] both wrong, but these are not two equal bodies, and in the end, it is Israel that holds most of the cards. And so even as we at least try to say to our Palestinian colleagues and urge that people stand up on the Palestinian side and say, "This is not the way," our primary job as Israelis, as Rabbis, is to speak to our people and say: Okay, yes, we understand that it is hard to think about the other side when you've been traumatized and [you feel] angry, betrayed, threatened and fearful. But if we are ever going to get out of this, we have to do this. And we have to move beyond that or above that, rise above that to look at what we are really doing with this intifada, and our big portion of the responsibility for having created this intifada.

Jewish Identity & a Responsibility to Speak Out About Social Justice

The way I grew up in Erie, Pennsylvania, it was assumed that what a basic part of being a Jew is to be concerned with universal human rights and social justice. This is what I learned from my parents, from my family, from my community, from my rabbis. And less than a year ago, some of the first results were published from the latest North American Jewish population survey. And one of the interesting findings was that of all the different measures of Jewish identity—the aspect of Jewish identity which more Jews in North America than anything else, the aspect of Jewish identity which gave more Jews pride in being Jewish the anything else—was the connection between Judaism and social justice.

Of course, different people in history take things in different ways. Rabbi Michael Learner said, "We know from psychologists that people who have been beaten as children often go out and beat children as adults," and I think that's definitely what has happened in Israel, given Jewish history, history of oppression and exile and what have you. But I'll always remember the words of my rabbi when I was an undergraduate student at Harvard University, the rabbi of Harvard Hillel at the time, Rabbi Ben-Zion Gold. I was very involved in the anti-apartheid movement at the time, and we often had different ministers that would come and speak, and I said I wanted my rabbi to come speak sometime, and so he did. And at the rally, the MC said, "And now the Rabbi Gold will give a blessing." And he said, "Yes I will give a blessing, but I have something to say first." And what he said was, "When I left Auschwitz behind, I made two promises to myself. The first promise was that I would dedicate myself to Judaism and Jews and Jewish culture, and that's why I am a rabbi today. And my second promise was to dedicate myself to ensure that nothing like this would happen to anybody, any human being, ever again, and that's why I'm here today at this anti-apartheid rally."

So oppression leads people in different directions, and people have gone, as a result of the Holocaust, saying, "I'm only looking out for number one," and people have gone the other way, the way of Rabbi Gold, and saying, "I have a special responsibility." Interestingly enough, you saw both of these in, of all people, the former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. [He]

was certainly someone whose policies I generally disagreed with, who really was a person who opened up the territory for settlement and everything else, and many of things that I disagreed with. He was also, under his leadership, Israel took in a number of Vietnamese boat people, when most countries around the world would not, and he said, “After what we went through in the Holocaust, we as Israel have a special responsibility to take in refugees such as the boat people. I believe, and one of the reasons that I’m a rabbi today, and one of the reasons that I do the work that I do today, that the reason that God has put us on this Earth is for what we call in Judaism, *tikkun olam*, being partners with God.

And the ongoing work of creation in sanctifying, and repairing, and making a more holy world. So I think that’s what it’s all about. And when I think about what the world would be like if only every human being would really internalize and act upon, this very basic message of *Breishit*, that all human beings are created in God’s image.

Of course, Judaism is an ancient and very variably religion, and you can find statements and ideas in the Jewish tradition which are very ethnocentric, and one of the problems today in Israel is that for a variety of the historical and sociological reasons, the religious community in particular is increasingly socialized into a very extreme...Israel is the life of democracy; there are many people who hold the values that I hold, and most of them tend to be secular. Which is why one of the purposes of an organization like Rabbis for Human Rights is not only to address human rights abuses, but to introduce to people’s intellectual universe that there is another equally Jewish, equally textually-based, equally authentic humanistic understanding of our Jewish tradition.

One of our rabbis, his daughter went to B’nai Akiva, one of the orthodox youth movements, met her husband to be when there was a vaguely liberal speaker, and they were the only two who clapped their hands at the end, and that’s how they met each other. But at the same time, for example the Midrash teaches us that to destroy a world, that to harm a human being is to destroy an entire world, and to save a human being is to save an entire world. And the original text doesn’t say a Jewish human being; it’s interesting, later on somebody tried to enter into that text—“to save a Jewish soul.” But the original text is “any human being.”

KEVIN DANAHER

The Long Historical Context for Understanding the Present

I think, I always try to put these things in larger contexts, and I think if you look in a several million year context, the problem is human beings have the ability to create “other” in their consciousness and project their negative qualities out onto the “other” and assume if we can just destroy the “other,” whether they’re infidels or collateral damage or fundamentalist Muslims or you know, whatever the label that’s put on them—gooks, dinks, slopes, whatever... that’s been going on for a long time. That has to be subverted. We have to figure out part of the paradigm shift to conscious evolution, and a peaceful global citizenship is being able to short circuit that ability of the human mind to create the “other” and project out negative qualities onto them without even knowing any of them personally. You know, it’s pretty amazing how [people say], “Fundamentalist Muslims are the problem.” How many do you know other than what the corporate media presented to you? How many of those do you know? It’s like people with racism. How many black people do you know by name? People say about Africa... how many Africans do you know by name?

Within a several thousand year context, the problem is you have three monotheisms that all come out of Abraham, it’s the same tribal roots: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. They’re monotheistic, as opposed to the native peoples of Africa and the Americas who were “animists” – that’s what the state department calls them. “Animists” means you see God in everything – every blade of grass, every puff of wind, every rain cloud, every human, every animal. Which, I don’t know, sounds pretty good to me. But the three monotheism have this paternalistic, ‘God as a man,’ which if you give it just a moment’s thought, you realize if God was going to be a gender it would be a female, not a male. Men are needed for like what, five seconds in the whole reproductive cycle, and they’re not really essential. They’re there to sacrifice themselves at the mouth of the cave when the Saber-tooth Tiger comes, that’s the function of testosterone. It’s a chemical to overcome self-preservation instincts. Not to dominate women but to be sacrificial in protecting the mother-child pair. That’s the historical function of testosterone. Unfortunately, it’s been turned into a dominance chemical—probably the most dangerous chemical ever in human history, I can’t think of dynamite or any other chemical that’s done more damage.

Bring it down closer into a five hundred year context, and it’s money values because that’s what drove Columbus and the other Conquistadors to commit genocide against native peoples; they were looking for gold and silver. The apartheid in South Africa was from the gold. More recent years it’s oil, but it’s not the oil itself. They don’t drink it or bathe in it—it’s the money that can be made from it. So you’ve got a paradigm shift going on from a composite of money values, violence, “God is on my side” to life values, non-violence, “God doesn’t take sides” – especially not in intra-species conflicts. You know, it’s like red ants and black ants, “God is on our side!” “God is on our side!” You know, if you ever heard that conversation you’d think, “Oh, ants, you’re so stupid.” So here are these humans going, “God is on our side!” “God is on our side!” So actually Bush and bin Laden, the fundamentalist far Right. . . five or ten percent of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity really come from the same paradigm: money values, power over—not power *with* as in family community but power *over*, the ability to dominate, violence—violence is justified because “God is on our side.” And we’re making a transition to a whole different set of values: life values, power *with* instead of power *over*, non-violence, “God

doesn't take sides," a different conceptualization of spirituality. And in fact, that goes back quite far: the inter-religious, the parliament of religions – Global [World] Parliament of Religions – traces its roots back over a hundred years. All sorts of people are getting out of this ghettoization, sectarian approach to spiritual matters. So I'm actually quite positive.

The Recent Historical Context for Understanding the Present

I think, you know, you can look at the glass half empty or the glass half full and because there's been so much emphasis on this war dance, this war rhetoric, chest thumping, media filled with residents of the military industrial complex, it's understandable that people like us get pessimistic. But if you look at it, we had built – we meaning the movement over a period of many years – a global justice movement (which was what we were calling ourselves) that made it impossible for these big institutions like the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund to even have a meeting. They had to cancel their meetings; they had to run away. They had to hide behind thousands of police and fences and shoot all this tear gas at us instead of engaging us in dialogue. We've been trying to get them into a debate on the media for a long time, and they won't debate us. World Bank and IMF have thousands of Ph.D. economists; they won't debate us on TV. We tried to shame them into it, but they won't. They say that we don't know what we're talking about, but they won't debate us on TV. Excuse me, it seems like if you had a better argument and better facts, you would want to debate us on TV and get us out in the media and show the people that we don't know what we're talking about. They don't do that.

The recent context of say, fifty or sixty years, end of World War II – U.S. inherits power globally: it's the only country to come out standing out of World War II. U.S. corporations go out to move into the vacuum left by British, French, German, Japanese, etc, colonial empires. Pentagon goes along, setting up about eight hundred U.S. military bases to guard those investments. The process of extracting wealth from third world countries takes place over decades. When local people see that extraction process going on in Guatemala, Iran, Bolivia, Chile, Vietnam, Indonesia, all these different countries, people say, "Wait a minute! We would like the resources to benefit us instead of Chiquita Banana or Exxon or British Petroleum." So you get a succession of governments that were elected by their own people – "We're not communists, we're not in bed with Moscow, we're not extremists of any sort" – they were liberal, sort of moderate, middle-of-the-road reformers, but they were economic nationalists. Jacobo Arbenz in '54 in Guatemala, the CIA overthrow—wasn't in bed with Moscow. '53, Mossadeq in Iran, elected by his own people, moderate—not in bed with Moscow. You know, Goulart in Brazil, LaMumba in the Congo—there's a whole list of them.

Basic rule of U.S. foreign policy in the post-WWII period has been, "There's one way: our way. And you are going to allow our corporations to come in and take out wealth from your workers, paid low pay, and your natural resources—or else. Or else you're history." And that was enforced with violence; it was enforced with death squads. And that's where this comes from. These people that were trained – this Al-Qaeda, the Mujahideen, Osama bin Laden, these people – this is not unique to the Middle East. What's unique is the Islamic element of it and the oil, but the U.S. Government trained death squads in Central America and Columbia and South East Asia and all sorts of places in Europe going back fifty years. . . U.S. policy was allied with the Mafia at the end of World War II – they let Lucky Luciano out of prison in New York state to go back and reorganize the Mafia in the late forties to overthrow the communist trade unions

in the docks of Italy. So there's a long history of U.S. government agencies, particularly the CIA but [also] others allying themselves with the most fascistic elements, the most Nazi-like elements, to fight what was sold to us then as a fight against communism. But that was for domestic consumption, that was for the minds of the American people. It was about protecting the profitability of protecting U.S. corporations being able to get in and take out resources at low prices and foul the environment and not have to pay for it.

So we come up to the present and in this particular context of the current September 11th aftermath, you just have to ask yourself one question: if the major export of the Middle East were broccoli, instead of oil, would this be happening, any of this stuff? No, it wouldn't. Because the United States government destabilized these other countries, put a royal family – a monarchy with no constitution – in power in Saudi Arabia and has backed them with all sorts of military hardware and thousands of troops in Saudi Arabia because of the oil, and not just the oil but the money that can be made for it. The same year as – 1930 is when the Saudi royal family [was] put in power by the U.S. and the British in Saudi Arabia – General Motors and a whole bunch of other automobile-related companies in the U.S. went around and bought up several dozen mass transit systems, light-rail vehicle systems – very efficient – and systematically destroyed them as a way to replace them with cars and buses. Internal combustion engine cars and buses using petroleum products leads to the automobilization, the malling of America, the suburbanization, all this other money, money, money, money. And they were convicted in court – they were taken to court, they were convicted in federal court of a criminal conspiracy to destroy U.S. mass transit systems and they were fined \$5000. Ooh, ow. That'll teach them a lesson. So you see their definition of justice is very hypocritical. It's a double-edged kind of thing. For the poor, kick em in the ass; three strikes you're out. For the corporations – what if we had three strikes you're out for corporate crime? If you said, "Any corporation guilty of three felonies against the U.S. government gets no more Pentagon contracts," all the major U.S. Pentagon contractors would be eliminated from being able to compete for Pentagon contracts. That's how bad their record is.

Justice & Defeating Terrorism

So what we have to realize is what's at issue here. Yes, there's terrorism, yes we have to stop these thugs. The way to stop them is not a "unilateralist war" definition but a "multi-lateralist crime against humanity" definition. Plenty of countries have had worse terrorism done on them than what was done to us. Maybe not in one day, but Algeria – almost the entire civil society of Algeria has been destroyed by terrorism. Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Germany, France, England. You know, all sorts of countries. Columbia is just torn apart by terrorism. They don't get to invade other countries and just drop bombs on whoever they think did it without any kind of trial. "Truth, whole truth, nothing but the truth"; "Innocent until proven guilty." Those are the two pillars of American jurisprudence. "Innocent until proven guilty"; "Truth, whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Excuse me? Let's go in that direction. Let's frame this September 11th as a crime against humanity. Use it as way to reach out to people all around the world who are opposed to terrorism, which is an overwhelming majority. Instead, what they're doing is they're defining it as war. That makes them rely on the CIA, the Pentagon – the very agencies that got us into this mess in the first place through the war with the Soviets in Afghanistan, creating these terrorists. And the alternative framing takes us in the direction of the International Criminal Court.

The International Criminal Court—established in the late 1990’s under UN auspices, started in Rome – over a hundred countries have signed , forty-two have ratified. When it gets to sixty ratifying governments, it becomes the International Criminal Court, fifteen judges, selected from many countries, very accepted standards of international jurisprudence. That kind of process would be impossible for any government – Taliban or otherwise – to resist. And if it resisted handing up criminals for trial, they would be subject to the most comprehensive kind of economic sanctions. A small weak country like Afghanistan, already in an economic crisis, would be very vulnerable to that. This is a very isolated regime, the Taliban. There are only three governments – Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates – that acknowledge them as the official government of Afghanistan. So it would have been relatively easy to isolate them and pressure them to give these people up. But instead, before the smoke was cleared from the New York rubble and before the bodies were recovered, the Bush administration very opportunistically jumped to a war-framing, and all we’ve seen on TV is representatives of the military industrial complex.

And if I could, I’d like to read this [quotation] from General Dwight David Eisenhower, who was president when I was a kid, president of the United States. This is from January 1961 when he was leaving office, he said, “In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence whether sought or unsought by the military industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes.” Very relevant, “We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals so that security and liberty may prosper together.” Now notice what you hear now is these people saying, “Oh, we have to sacrifice civil liberties for the war.” And one short [quotation], one sentence from Benjamin Franklin, who said, “Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.”

So I think we need to get back in touch with what is it about America that is still looked up to around the world? It’s our human rights: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, . . . that all [people] are endowed by the creator with [certain] inalienable Rights. . .” Life, Liberty, pursuit of Happiness. That, and that fact that we’re the most diverse country in the world. We’re the most diverse country in the world. You wouldn’t know it watching TV or reading the editorial pages. This is something people can do. Test it in your own city. Open the editorial page each day and see what percentage is rich, white males. Wealthy, white males from the military industrial complex, from big corporations, saying, “Free trade, money rules,” all this kind of stuff. Women. Let’s hear the rest of the American bouquet. We have this incredibly diverse bouquet, and we’re not hearing from them. And if we were to hear from them, and if we were to hear from them, I think we’d come out with a much better foreign policy because it would reflect the nature of humanity rather than this small elite, this corporate elite that has taken over our government, has taken over our university college system – all the boards of trustees, they’re all corporate banking officials – and taken over the public airwaves. The public airwaves. It’s our property, we’re the landlord. They’re the tenant; they don’t pay any rent. And they use the public airwaves to sell us to the corporate media. They sell us, our minds, access to our brains and our values to the corporate media. That’s wrong.

So what we need is—it took hundreds of years to get separation of Church and State – now we need to have separations of Corporations and State. Or separation of Money and the

State. And that's what campaign finance reform is about – ending corporate welfare, ending corporate lobbying, building a firewall between governance and money. And that has to happen, not only in Washington, at the national level, but it has to happen at the global level, too. The World Bank, the IMF, the World Trade Organization. We're for rules in the Global Justice Movement. We're not against rules, they say, "Oh, the WTO is about rule-making. Fine." Let's make rules, but let's look at who's sitting at the table. Is it a monocrop or is it diverse, is it biodiverse? And two, what are the values by which capital gets invested and these economic rules get made? Is it make profits for big transnational corporations, or is it meet social needs and save the environment? So, that's part of the paradigm shift is people saying, "Look, we want to democratize not only the capitol with an 'O' but the capital with an 'A'." And that investment decision-making process has to be opened up and democratized. We [have to] have a lot of different kinds of people at the table, and we've got to have life values instead of money values.

And the question is: are you going to subordinate life to the economy, or subordinate the economy to life? And you just ask people on the street, "Which is sacred: commerce or life?" People know the answer. People know life is sacred, not commerce. So you have to subordinate commerce to life – human life and the environment. And that's part of the struggle that's the defining struggle of our age. This other unfortunate violent, headline grabbing mania that's going on between multi-millionaires who got their money from the oil industry and are willing to use violence to further their cause and think God is on their side—that describes both sets of leaders. That's got to stop and only we, the citizens can do it. So people need to stop being passive spectators and get out there and fight the cult of powerlessness and get out there and get active and change the world and make history.

Global State vs. Global Democracy

The Global Justice movement has raised this issue of the "global state," right. There is a global state in formation. That's what the World Bank, the IMF, the World Trade Organization, NATO, the United Nations... that's what these transnational institutions are. And you have two basic pieces of it. One piece, what I would call the good piece, is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – you know, everybody has the right to a job, everybody has a right to health care, education, gender equity, all these kinds of basic principles that are really beautiful and very forward thinking – thank you, Eleanor Roosevelt. Written in San Francisco, my hometown, at the end of World War II, as a way to try and prevent the nastiness, the Holocaust, the racism, the war, the millions of deaths that happened during World War II. The other piece of the state of global governance is the money, money, money, money. Money, money, money, and we'll use violence to impose that extraction of wealth from local economies.

So what the Global Justice Movement has been saying is kind of two-fold. One, that's wrong to have a small group of people – corporate officials – dominate the entire planet. And two, you have to have an alternative economy that's a grassroots economy. That's a local, green, renewable energy, recycled, organic, bioregionally rooted in the local community, locally controlled, small-scale, able to get your hands on the person. You're walking down the street and you got Home Depot on one side and Tony's Hardware store on the other side of the street. If you spend your money in Tony's Hardware Store, Tony's the local guy. You see him at the PTA meeting. You got a problem with his store, you can say, "Hey Tony, what's going on here?" He's reachable. Home Depot: you spend your money at Home Depot, that money's gone to Atlanta to the home office and to the shareholders on Wall Street who are God knows who.

You couldn't even track them down if you wanted to. So this is about democratizing the economy. And it's not just about democratizing the local economy; it's about democratizing the global economy.

In this debate over U.S. trade legislation, which is part of the Global Justice Movement's struggle, things like NAFTA, the Free Trade Area of the Americas, Fast Track Trade Negotiating Authority for the president, which takes power away from Congress – the Constitution gives Congress the power to make trade treaties; it takes that power away and gives it to the President. This is what they're doing: undermining the Constitution bit by bit, right? So in those struggles, we're saying to people, "Look, you're directly affected by this. The reason your jobs left – the good manufacturing jobs that used to pay \$20 or \$25 an hour – the reason they left and went to China is because workers in China can't have unions; they're not free, they don't like their government, they get paid a dollar a day. So of course these corporations are going to move there if you let them because their sole motivation is the bottom line, is maximizing profits. So part of the global justice struggle is a transformation of economic enterprise to have a triple bottom line. Yeah, you [have to] make enough money to pay your bills and still keep your nose above water, but you also [have to] be socially accountable, and you have to be environmentally sustainable. Those are the demands of the movement... so it's a triple bottom line, not a single bottom line.

And you can see that manifested in a lot of ways. Socially responsible investing, those firms, there's hundreds of socially responsible investment firms. They have trillions, literally trillions of dollars, now. Community-supported agriculture, where a few dozen families contract a farmer directly, cuts Safeway and agribusiness out of the middle, direct relationship between producer and consumer. The Fair Trade Movement: Fair Trade coffee is paying its 550,000 coffee farmers in the global south \$1.26 a pound minimum floor price. The world market price is less than fifty cents. So you got more than twice as much that we, we who supposedly aren't good at entrepreneurship, that we are able to construct an alternative global economy from the bottom up and you can see it, and the reason I know about it is because I study it, but Dan Rather's not going to tell the American public about this. But it's coming up from the grassroots. Local currencies, the public library. I always say when I get on Right-wing radio, I always say, "You know, there's a socialist institution in every community in the United States."

And they say, "What? What are you talking about? What is it?" It's called a public library. Because there's not a market; there's no cash nexus connecting people to books because knowledge is so important that over a hundred years ago we created a system to give people access to knowledge. Well, what about health care? Housing? All these other things that are equally important social services. What's the public library version of those? They should be accessible to every human being on the face of the earth. There shouldn't be one starving child in this world. But as it is we have one every four seconds dying from hunger somewhere globally.

The US & the Middle East

Well, it's directly related because here you had a government; I mean if you go back, there was a government in Afghanistan in the 70s that had come to power off a military coup by officers who had been trained in the Soviet Union. It was a government that was sympathetic to the Soviet Union. The U.S. government under Jimmy "Human Rights" Carter and his national security advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski – and this is on record, Brzezinski admits it – they sent the

CIA in to help train these Mujahideen before the Soviets invaded. They went in to help destabilize this pro-Soviet government, hoping that the Soviets would come in militarily to prop up that government and get their legs broken in the process. And that did happen. So Brzezinski, to this day – God bless his soul, and there’s a special place in hell reserved for him – he justifies it, saying, “Well, it helped bring down the Soviet Empire.” Well, duh, what’s the lesson for us? If the Soviets’ ten years invading Afghanistan could not beat these Mujahideen, people think that we’re going to go in there and in a year or two clean these guys out and put an end to it and not suffer the same kind of fate. It brought down the communist empire in Moscow – that war, that ten years’ war in Afghanistan.

So if you look at U.S. policy in the region, what you see is a willingness to manipulate, side with fascists, train death squads, kill people, in order to maintain access, profitable access to that oil. So, for twenty-five years after the U.S. Government overthrew Mossadeq in Iran in ’53, for twenty-five years loaded up the shah of Iran, the king, with all of this U.S. weaponry, trained his secret police, etc. He gets overthrown in the late ‘70s by Khomeini. So now you’ve got a guy who’s got all the U.S. weapons who says the U.S. is the devil. How are you going to break the legs of Iran? Iraq? Saddam Hussein? From ’80 to ’88, the two Reagan administrations, ’80 to ’88, is the Iran-Iraq war. And the U.S. government supported Iraq. Saddam Hussein was the largest recipient of U.S. food aid credits. It allowed him to buy a lot of military stuff – scud missile launchers, etc. Break the legs of the Iranian economy. Once you’ve accomplished that, then you got Iraq. And the reason it’s Iran and Iraq is because those are the two big regional powers that if they got together could walk into Saudi Arabia and take over those oil fields, and there wouldn’t be much the U.S. could do about it.

It also explains why the U.S. left Saddam in power and doesn’t want democracy in Iraq. Because if you had elections in Iraq, you would get probably a Shi’ite government. Because you’ve got a Shi’ite plurality, a Sunni minority, and a Kurd minority. So you’d probably get a Shi’ite or a Shi’ite-Kurd coalition government. If that government formed a coalition with the Shi’ite government in Iran, that alliance of Iran and Iraq could just walk into the Saudi oil fields and take over that oil. So it was this kind of chess piece mentality of, you know, “We’re going to manipulate this.” So people say, “Oh, well, these Islamic fundamentalists, they don’t believe in separation of Church and State.” Yeah that’s a real problem because most people in the world have sort of accepted that principle of separation of Church and State. Who violated the principle of Church and State first in the Middle East? It was the U.S. Government foreign policy. The monarchy in Saudi Arabia, who are heavily allied with these Right-wing Islamic clerics as a way to control the population and justify their rule. And with the state of Israel, the Zionist state of Israel. Again, violation of separation of Church and State.

So, eventually, if you suppress, if you violently suppress the secular nationalists like ... Worshippers gathered to cheer Pope John Paul II who visited the ... the Egyptian nationalist Gamal Abdel Nasser and Mossadeq and people like that, and you violently suppress them, eventually political pressure is going to find an outlet, and in the contemporary period, it finds that outlet in Islamic fundamentalism. But these fundamentalists represent maybe ten percent of all Muslims, but by elevating them to warrior status, by framing September 11th as war, and having it be a war between the United States with Bush – he said it again today and the other day he says it over and over again, “You’re either with us, or you’re with the terrorists.” Just like they did in the cold war; you were either with capitalism or with communism. You’re either with undemocratic corporations or undemocratic communists. What that does is that elevates

Osama bin Laden to superpower status. This is the best recruitment mechanism. Osama bin Laden is sitting in a cave right now going, “Excellent, excellent.” He’s just loving this because they wanted this response. Notice the Taliban released to the international media – this is a Nazi government, total control – they released to the international media the video of people in Afghanistan sacking the U.S. embassy, tearing it apart. They made sure those images got out. The first press conference they did after that, the Taliban guy said, “America doesn’t have the courage to invade us.” It was like they were saying, “Come on, come on. We dare you.”

What do they care if innocent civilians get killed? Those innocent civilians getting killed is the best recruiting mechanism they have for their stupid movement. Because they can go out amongst the 1.2 billion Muslims in the world and say, “Look at America, what they’re doing, see? What we told you about those American infidels is true.” And what they want to do is they want to destabilize that whole region. So you’ve got Arafat in danger of being overthrown, the Egyptian government is in danger of being overthrown, the Jordanian monarchy is in danger of being overthrown, the Saudi monarchy is in danger of being overthrown, and the Pakistani government – military dictatorship where now they call Musharraf a president; you know, he’s a military guy who overthrew an elected government. Now the U.S. is in bed with him because it’s convenient. All of these collaborator regimes are in danger of being overthrown because of the anti-U.S. sentiment that is being stirred up by the U.S. bombing campaign. So this is like total shooting yourself in the foot as a foreign policy, but nobody ever accused the Bush administration of being brilliant, so we shouldn’t be surprised by this.

Consumerism & Corporate Dominance

It’s epitomized in the SUVs flying the flags. You know, one person in a huge military vehicle going down the freeway burning dead dinosaurs in a totally unsustainable way and, you know, being all patriotic about it. We live in an empire. It’s not just a nation state. It’s an empire. It’s the most powerful nation state ever in the history of the world. Rome, Sparta, Greece, British Empire – there’s never been a nation state with as much global reach and global influence as the United States. And that has negative consequences in terms of death squads and overthrowing governments and preventing democracy and all of that. But for the average American it has a lot of affluence benefits because if you can buy twenty-dollar sneakers from sweatshops in China, that feels like a good thing. People like cheap stuff. But you have to look at what underpins it all.

What underpins it all is ideology. And what it takes to maintain that ideology of consumerist blissful ignorance is about 3,000 commercial messages a day. That’s what the average American gets hit with, about 3,000 commercial messages a day: newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, billboards. Everywhere you look: buy this, buy this. The metamessage is “you are what you own.” You define success as an individual quantitatively by the amount of things you own, not qualitatively by the nature of your relationships with other people. Do people love you? If you were to die how many people would cry? How did you affect the course of history? Things like that. No, no, no. It’s stuff. Stuff. How much stuff you got. And most people have so much stuff they have to have yard sales and garage sales to make room for new stuff, to buy new stuff. And it’s this treadmill. So you get up on Monday morning, go to a job you really don’t like because you got to get that paycheck to make payments on all that stuff that you got. And that stuff is there to try and fill the hole you feel from the alienated labor that you did to get the money to buy the stuff to fill the hole. If you saw a donkey with a carrot hung

in front of it's face chasing it and pulling a cart, you'd say, "Oh, stupid donkey." But that's us. You know, we're the donkey. The corporations running our government, *our* government, are up sitting in the seat, dangling the commodity spectacle out in front of us.

But let's look at the positive side: the glass half-full is that if it were normal and natural for human beings to orient their lives around consuming commodities, you wouldn't need to hit them with 3,000 commercial messages a day. You would occasionally remind them, "Go shopping!" and we'd all run off to the mall. But it's not like that. What's normal and natural and organic for human beings is to focus on family, community, love, caring, justice, equity. Those are the things that organically matter. And that's why they have to hit us with so many commercial messages to get us out of that normal track and get us onto this sick – it's really a social pathology. And it can't be sustained. If just China consumed commodities, consumed resources the way we do, the world would be destroyed. So this is not a model. We've been told, "Oh yes, we're the model. Development is a ladder. We're up here; poor countries are down here. They're trying to be like us." No. We don't want them to be like us. So I ask average people, "Do you have the right to own a car? Do you have the right to own an SUV?" "Yeah, sure." "Does every Chinese person have the right to own a car, let alone an SUV?" If you say no, you're a racist. If you say yes, you can kiss the planet's ass goodbye. Because as it is now, every biological system on the face of this earth is either in rapid decline or is in outright collapse. Topsoil, groundwater, glaciers melting, polar ice caps melting, ozone layer being destroyed, air quality... everything. All these biological systems: species being destroyed that we haven't even identified yet. What right do we have as one species among many to destroy this little envelope of life that we've been given by the creator? If there is such a thing a sacrilege, I think that's what it is.

So we need to wake up is the main thing. And particularly in this country, and particularly those of us who are educated. We have the ability to go out and communicate to people and say, "Hey, let me ask you some questions. Should we be able to find Afghanistan on a map before we bomb people there? Ever tasted an MRE (a meal ready to eat)? What's the difference between Osama bin Laden justifying killing innocent people here by calling them infidels and us justifying killing innocent Afghans by calling them collateral damage?" What's the difference? No essential difference. It's just language. So we need to ask people some very tough, probing questions.

The most disturbing thing to me as a public citizen in this current environment is that asking these questions causes people to question my integrity and my patriotism. It's like, hey, you think I'm doing this because I'm not patriotic? I would have left a long time ago. I'm doing it because I'm patriotic. I care about this country. I've hitchhiked all across the country. I've been in every state. I know this country. I love this country, the people of this country. The leaders... it's like most countries: good people, bad government. Because you don't get the government you want, you get the best government money can buy. Again, going back to an earlier point. We've got to separate money and governance. If we don't build a firewall to separate corporations and the state – separate money and governance – there's no solution to these problems. We've got to get at that core issue of separating money from governance. Government is supposed to be a tool of the people. It's supposed to be our mechanism for providing goods and services and protecting us – not a servant of corporate interests. That's wrong. It's a coup. They've done a coup on our government.

The Global Justice Movement & Breaking Ranks

The global justice movement, which is what we are calling ourselves. The corporate media were calling us the “Anti-Globalization Movement” – that’s a phrase we never used. And they started putting that on us. “Anti-globalization.” It’s like the peace movement being called “peaceniks.” You know; it’s this degrading thing, negative. And what we focused on was economic justice: the right to eat, the right to a job. The right of parents to not hear their kids crying at night, “Mommy, I’m hungry. Daddy, I’m hungry.” Which, unfortunately, millions of people have to suffer that spiritual violence on a day to day basis. So, the September 11th events – if you frame it as crime against humanity, it perfectly fits under a justice framework. It’s just criminal justice. We were originally educating people about economic justice. Now we need to expand our mandate to educate people about criminal justice. The need for an international criminal court. The need for humanitarian police because there are some bad guys in the world, and you have to have some of your own bad guys who can go in and kick their ass and take their guns away from them so they don’t hurt innocent people. But you don’t do that unilaterally, the U.S. as a nation state. You do it multilaterally.

Why didn’t U.N. peacekeeping blue helmets get sent into Israel-Palestine years ago? Or when this recent intifada started a year ago. They should have been in there because when you... I’ve seen it in Northern Ireland, I’ve seen it in Southern Africa, I’ve seen it in Central America, I’ve seen it in the Middle East. When you get groups killing each other on both sides, it strengthens the gunheads. It strengthens the argument and the legitimacy of the gunheads, and you try and argue with those gunheads, even the ones you agree with politically that are near you on the political spectrum, and they’ll get to a point where they’ll say, “Hey. You’re disagreeing with me. I could kill you. I could kill you and get away with it. So you’d better shut up.” You have one of those conversations that’ll convince you that nonviolence is the way to go because it’s a dead end. It’s a dead end, that violence stuff. Violence begets violence. Martin Luther King said, “Darkness cannot drive out darkness. Only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate. Only love can drive out hate.” So that’s what we [have to] get focused on is the whole package of different values: life values, life cycle, nonviolence, God doesn’t take sides, power *with* not power *over*. And, in fact, that anti-hierarchical sentiment against rankism – Robert Fuller has a book, *Breaking Ranks*, where he talks about rankism: gender rank, class, race, there’s all these different...physical force. This is ranking stuff. Well, look at the Global Justice Movement. It’s flat hierarchies, no generals, all lieutenants, consensus decision making. Yeah, it’s messy and takes a long time, but when you reach a decision, it’s a lot more solid decision because it was arrived at democratically.

So this is the next stage of human evolution: conscious evolution, the democratization of the entire planet, the democratization of all institutions, the full equity of women. I would even go more than that. Like take these men out of power and take women randomly off the street. Either the TV here, it’s all males from the military industrial complex thumping their chest about why we need to go to war. And then the Taliban locking women up and the next government, the Northern Alliance and all these guys. This is all men. Where are the women? Let’s get the gender equity stuff immediately; it’s an emergency. Certainly the women can’t do any worse than the men have done. The men have really screwed up badly, and I say that, obviously as a self-confessed male. We got a lot of work to do, us men, to you know, pull each other’s shirts back a little bit and let somebody else take over because it’s not working. The way it’s going is not working. But part of the global justice movement is you look at how much of

the leadership is women. My organization is dominated by women – Fifty Years Is Enough! Network – director is a woman. There’s all sorts of really great organizations, you look who’s the leadership. The leadership is women. And the men who participate in those know how to take leadership from women, that is receive leadership from women. Don’t have a problem with somebody saying, “Hey Kevin, could you go over and clean up those dishes over there.” And yeah, okay, I know my place. You know, I’ll do that because we’ve gone through this process over the years.

So it’s changing. It’s not going to be on the evening news with Dan Rather, but it’s out there. It’s below their radar, which is good; it’s why we surprise them at these World Bank, IMF, WTO protests. They were like, “Where’d this come from?” Yeah, that’s because they don’t read our stuff. We read the *Wall Street Journal* and *Business Week* and *The Economist*. I read that stuff religiously. They don’t read our stuff. So we caught them off-guard. And they don’t know what to do with us because I think they sense that we have a superior ideology; we have a superior value system, and they’re already getting a whiff that they’re going to lose this struggle. So that makes them dangerous. A dying bull kicks the hardest. You [have to] watch out. But we’re going to win; it’s just a question of how long it’s going to take.

NOAM CHOMSKY

The Afghan Trap

Well, the immediate response is shared by everyone: it was a horrible atrocity and crime against humanity is not too strong a word for it. So shock and horror and outrage, and these are the natural responses, and I share them, as does everyone. The further question is: what you do about it? That's a different matter. And then you have choices. One way is to answer bin Laden's prayers and launch a massive assault against some Muslim population. That's precisely what they're asking for, and every intelligence expert and strategic analyst knows it and has been pointing it out over and over again. Just yesterday the French foreign minister pointed out that a massive military assault against any Muslim population will be in, say Afghanistan, to do that would be to fall into what he called a diabolical trap and he knows exactly what he's talking about. France, and French intelligence particularly, was deeply involved, in fact played a primary role, in drawing the Russians into what Zbigniew Brzezinski later called an Afghan trap. When Brzezinski took credit for the fact, maybe he is exaggerating, but he took credit (national security advisor under Carter) in a secret directive of 1979, which provided aid to the Mujahidin fighting against the government of Afghanistan and according to Brzezinski the purpose was to insight a Russian invasion, which indeed took place a couple of months later and drew the Russians into this Afghan trap, which led this major factor leading to the collapse of the Soviet Empire. Brzezinski is very proud of that. The French were in the forefront of planning that, so when Foreign Minister Vedriner talks about a diabolical trap, he knows exactly what he is talking about. Yes, that's one reaction and the consequences are predictable.

The consequences will presumably be exactly what bin Laden and his network are praying for: an attack that kills lots of Afghans, let's say, will help increase the anger and resentment that are already rampant throughout the region. Privileged people, poor people, everyone because of U.S. policies, it will increase it, it will mobilize more people to the same cause, and then there will be further terrorist atrocities in the United States and Europe and maybe much worse ones. This is a very familiar dynamic. It's a familiar cycle of escalating violence. I mean, on a small scale, you see it in smaller conflicts. Let's say take Northern Ireland. I mean, there are what they call hardmen on both sides whose interest is primarily to kill, and what they hope is that the other side will carry out a brutal attack which will give them a reason and popular support for carrying out an even more brutal retaliation, and then the cycle escalates.

The same is true in the Balkans, the same is true in Israel/Palestine; it's true wherever there [are] conflicts like that. There are ways to escalate conflict. There are ways to escalate violence and to ensure that things will get even worse, and the massive response is one of them. I should add only one point: we are already engaged in a massive attack against Afghans. Just a couple of days ago the New York Times reported that the U.S. government had demanded that Pakistan cut off food aid and other supplies which are keeping millions of suffering Afghans just this side of starvation. If Pakistan follows the orders, as they presumably will, they'll move to the other side. Millions of people will be starving, maybe to death. These are not Taliban; these are victims of the Taliban, and we are now deciding that we want to kill them. That's not going to be unknown in the region.

How Should We Respond?

This was a criminal act, and it should be treated as a criminal act, and there is a very definite series of procedures that you would go through, and, in fact, there are precedents other countries have gone through. So let's take a precedent, which is a good one. Fifteen years ago the United States was engaged in a major terrorist attack against Nicaragua, I mean, much worse than this, killed tens of thousands of people, practically destroyed the country. Nicaragua did not respond by setting off bombs in Washington, which I suppose they could have done. They responded by going to the World Court. The World Court issued a judgement condemning the United States, ordering it to terminate its, what they called unlawful use of force, that is, terrorism and to pay massive reparations. The U.S. of course dismissed the court judgement. With contempt, Nicaragua then went to the UN Security Council. The Security Council passed a resolution calling on all states to observe international law, directed to the United States. Well, they didn't pass it; of course, the U.S. vetoed it. So Nicaragua went to the general assembly, which passed a very similar resolution unanimously, the United States and Israel voting no. They then went back the same year, the next year, did the same thing. This time El Salvador joined Israel and the United States in opposing international law. At that point, Nicaragua couldn't do anything, but that's not going to happen if the United States proceeds that way. It's not the only example.

If the United States proceeds by the methods, by what is dictated by our own solemn treaty obligations and the principals we like to uphold when it is convenient to apply them to others, there is a procedure: put together a case, find out/get some evidence about who the perpetrators were, present that evidence in an appropriate forum, could be the security council, could be the World Court, if that's too slow it could be unfortunately the United States can't go to the International Criminal Court because its refusals to accept its jurisdiction but an independent court could be established or any other independent tribunal, security council is enough. Present the case, present the case that most of the world is asking for.

So the Arab League, for example, the other day said we are happy to join this attack against war, against terrorism, but first you have to provide us with some evidence. Yes, that's a reasonable request. The Egyptian ambassador just said it again yesterday: provide us with some evidence and we will proceed. If some evidence can be put together, you know, it doesn't have to be the kind that'll convict in a court of law, but some plausible evidence as to who's responsible present it, get international authorization for an appropriate action, which could be taken on the orders of the security council, for example, and then proceed to find the perpetrators and bring them to some sort of appropriate tribunal. That could be done, and in fact it is the only way to proceed, unless of course you want to just demonstrate to the world that we are indeed a violent rogue state and virtually guarantee that the circle of violence will escalate with further atrocities like this here. Those are essentially the choices.

There is a more long-term issue. This is the immediate question. The more long-term issue is the same one that arises in any act of violence no matter what it is. When Timothy McVeigh bombed a federal building in Oklahoma City, one possible response would have been to say nuke Montana and Idaho; it's a possible response. Another response is to find out who is responsible, try him, convict him and try to figure out what lies behind it. Because something *does* lie behind it, and when you investigate what lies behind such acts, you invariably find that there's some elements, which are realistic, and those have to be dealt with; that's what provides the background out of which these actions arise. That's true of any act of violence. You know, a

minor criminal assault in a city or a major war. If you don't want to look at the reasons, you are simply saying, Well, we want to ensure that this continues. And in this case, the reasons are not very much hidden; they are well known in fact.

What are the Broader Motivations of the Attacks?

First of all, we have to know who the perpetrators were. But let's assume, which is plausible, that it's the bin Laden network. Notice that doesn't necessarily mean bin Laden himself. It's possible that he is telling the truth when he said he had nothing to do with this particular act, hidden away in some cave in Afghanistan. But the network that he helped establish, that's involved. We know a lot about that network; in fact the CIA knows more about it than they are telling us, because they helped set it up. This is a network that was established, as Brzezinski says, first as an effort to draw the Russians into the Afghan trap, assuming that he is telling the truth, and then through the 1980s in an effort to cause maximal harm to the Soviet Union; in order to do this, the CIA, Pakistani Intelligence, Saudi Arabia, help from others, Israel, Egypt, Britain, they rounded up the best killers they could find, who happened to be extreme radical fundamentalist Arabs. And there has been blowback all over the world, I mean Hamas in Palestine had its origins there, the Islamic Jihad in Egypt, which has been tearing the place apart, had their origins there; it's blowing back all over. But they set it up, they backed it, they gave them advanced armaments including stinger missiles, they trained them, and, finally, they carried out terrorist attacks inside Russia. Finally, the Russians pulled out. They *hate* the Russians, but at that point they stopped carrying out terrorist attacks in Russia except in one case. They went to Chechnya, where they're fighting to resist the Russian atrocities there and are carrying out terrorist attacks in Moscow. It is one of the reasons Moscow is happy to join this, hoping the U.S. will back them in their brutal repression in Chechnya. Also, they are involved in western China, in the Uighur uprising. And China, again, would be delighted to have the United States join in repression.

But the U.S. intelligence knows all about these people they helped create. And they have their own reasons, and they've told us what their reasons are, if we want to listen. There are plenty of in-depth interviews with bin Laden himself, there is a CIA profile on him, they are all pretty much the same. He was fighting a holy war to drive the Russians out of part of Afghanistan when the U.S. established permanent military bases in Saudi Arabia. He says that he's going to fight a holy war to drive the U.S. out of Saudi Arabia, which is much more important to them because Saudi Arabia is a guardian of the holiest shrines and so on. Now the Saudi Arabian regime is a major target it's the most fundamentalist Islamic regime in the world outside of the Taliban but it doesn't satisfy their criteria, they want to get rid of the corrupt, and they are corrupt, the corrupt, brutal, authoritarian regimes in the Arab states, replace them with, what they consider proper, Muslim regimes and defend Muslims around the world: in Chechnya, western China, probably Aceh, Indonesia, Algeria, yes, that's what their plans are. They've been perfectly frank about them, and they're perfectly willing to carry out the violent terrorist actions to achieve these ends.

It's not new, we may forget, but twenty years ago, in 1983, one suicide bomber in Lebanon drove the U.S. military out of Lebanon. Maybe we forget; they didn't forget. There have been other cases since. Suicide bombers are fundamentally unstoppable. If people are perfectly happy to commit suicide, there are endless numbers of ways in which they can succeed. So that's the particular category of the bin Laden network. Now they draw from a reservoir.

There is a background, and the reservoir includes, with different levels of intensity, people from bankers and businessmen, to the huge mass of poor and impoverished people who are being brutally oppressed very often. Over that range throughout the region, there's plenty of grievances, and they'd also tell you about them. So, for example, the Wall Street Journal, the day after the bombing published a good story on the attitudes of wealthy Muslims bankers, professionals, businessmen and so on. They were very frank. They said that they object to the fact that the United States is supporting harsh, authoritarian, anti-democratic governments throughout the region, that the U.S. is preventing independent economic development by propping up oppressive regimes. I'm quoting and their prime concern, and that's everyone, is the decisive U.S. support for the Israeli military occupation of they're going into its 35th year harsh, brutal, oppressive, the U.S. is providing the diplomatic support, the military means, for the settlement and the oppression and everything else. They know that, everybody knows that. It's been blocking efforts at diplomatic settlement for years, serious diplomatic settlement, that's on the one side. And that contrasts very sharply with U.S. policy towards Iraq.

In the last ten years, the United States has devastated the civilian society of Iraq. Maybe, if Madeline Albright gets up on television and is asked, What do you think about killing half a million children under five? And she says, Well, it's a high price, but we think it's worth it. Fine, maybe she thinks it's worth it, and the U.S. government apparently does, but that doesn't mean that the people in the Middle East think that the price is worth it to kill half a million children while strengthening Saddam Hussein, which is exactly what they are doing. So you put these two policies side by side, and it's causing tremendous outrage. Now that's the rich people. That is the pro-U.S. wealthy people. You go down to the streets, or take a look at the people who are at the wrong end of the guns in the occupied territories or in Lebanon, or the slums of Cairo, or wherever you go, you get much more bitter reactions, and out of that background comes the kind of fury and desperation that can allow groups like the CIA-organized bin Laden network to carry out their activities.

How Do We Remedy The Root Causes?

Every single case that I mentioned just quoting wealthy, pro-U.S. people in the region. Every single case is real, and every single case is remedial. There is no necessity for the United States to continue to prop up oppressive regimes to block efforts at internal democracy, to block attempts at internal development. There is no necessity in continuing to destroy Iraqi civilian society, while strengthening Saddam Hussein; that is not a law of nature. And crucially, and this is everyone's main concern, the U.S. insistence on maintaining what amounts to effectively permanent Israeli occupation of the territories, and every single plan right through Camp David continues that; that's by no means necessary. Since the U.S. has now, during the last ten years the so-called Oslo years the U.S. has supported a vast expansion of the settlements and the territories. Jerusalem, what they've called Jerusalem, is now far beyond its original boundaries, it's probably eight times its size, and that includes regions that here are called parts of Jerusalem, but everywhere else in the world they are called illegal settlements. So the fighting that's going on between Gilo and Beit Jala, Gilo is called here a settlement and part of Jerusalem, well call it that if you like, but it's a settlement placed illegally on areas that were conquered. That and everything else is in gross violation of the Geneva Conventions. The world is united on this.

Outside, when a vote comes up in the United Nations, it's unanimous, Israel opposed, the United States abstaining, because it doesn't want to take such a blatant stand in violation of

fundamental principals of international law, particularly because the origin of these principals, the Geneva Conventions, were established right after the second world war in an effort to put on record that the crimes of the Nazis could not be repeated. Everybody knows that. Just anything that is done there, any single settlement, any act of repression, it's all in violation of the convention, it's all illegal. The United States continues to support it, provides the aid and if you go beyond the so-called Jerusalem, the vast area of Jerusalem, there's another settlements have virtually doubled during the Oslo years, and they're all over the place. A settlement doesn't just mean people, you know it means big infrastructure development, with big highways and barriers and so on. The Camp David proposal, the one that was regarded here as so generous and magnanimous last year, that broke the West Bank into three separate cantons. Two big settlements would be taken over, ultimately annexed inside Israel, one going almost to Jericho, breaks the West Bank in half, in fact it was developed for that purpose. It includes a city, Maale Adumim, and another one like it to the north, up to Ariel, and in Israel, these are commonly called bantustans, three cantons in the West Bank and further encroachments, and all separated from the Gaza strip, and who knows what's going to happen there. Well, if you put forth proposals like that, you are saying, Let's continue with the occupation. And it's a harsh occupation. Palestinians have been living under siege. It's gotten much worse during the Oslo process, during these years, the last eight years. The Israeli military occupation prevented any form of economic development that was policy, no economic development. After 1993, when the Oslo thing started, it got worse. The closures were almost constant. The economy has deteriorated sharply; the repression is extremely harsh. Now there are two forms of repression. It's not only from the Israeli military authorities, but also from the Palestinian authority, which is a miserably corrupt, brutally oppressive regime, mostly collaborating with Israel and surprising the population. So now they have two weights on their shoulders, and it is very brutal. People live with daily humiliation, with beatings, with killings, stuck in your house, you can't cross the road to go to the hospital or visit your friend. Anybody who knows anything about it knows it's total misery.

By now, after the U.S. support the U.S. support for the occupation has been going on for thirty years, but it's intensified in the last ten years, and by now it's extremely hard to deal with. I mean, to try to withdraw to the internationally recognized border, as the world demands, it has been for 25 years, that's been the international consensus. By now that means dismantling areas that are within Israel that look as much like Jerusalem as Cambridge looks like Boston, it's part of the city. What do you do about that? It's probably the only solution now, after these miserable policies, is some kind of territorial exchange, which will leave some of these areas, maybe what's called Jerusalem, parts of it at least, inside Israel, but will give equivalent territory, maybe in...that doesn't mean a couple pieces of sand in the desert it means equivalent serious territory adjacent to the Palestinian State, hand it over to that. There are possible arrangements. It's not beyond the bounds of feasibility, but there has to be a willingness to do it, and this is not just remember while the United States is providing with offering light reprimands when Israel abuses, say carries out political assassinations or sends tanks into Ramala or something, it's also providing, at the same time, providing the means to continue and intensify those actions. So right at the beginning of the latest antifada, within the first days, Israel was using helicopters, military helicopters to attack civilian targets, killing plenty of people. This is reported. There was no Palestinian fire; all of the violence was confined to the occupied territories. On October third, two days after the fighting started, Clinton made the biggest deal in a decade to send new military helicopters to Israel, for that purpose, and they were used for that purpose Israel can't

produce helicopters, so we provide them. Soon after that they began to be used for target of assassinations. The U.S. said we don't like that, but it sent more helicopters in February. As soon as Israel began to use F-16s, advanced jets, to attack civilian targets in the occupied territories. Within a week, there was a new deal to send them more F-16s, and this goes across the board, and it's been going on for years. And it doesn't get reported here, but people there know that when a helicopter is coming, it's a U.S. helicopter with an Israeli pilot. And the same is true with the rest of them, they know. If we want to keep our heads in the sand and say we don't know, well we can, but then we are just guaranteeing, we are contributing not only to crimes, because they are crimes, but to laying the basis for an escalation of crimes which will react against us, too.

What Is The Immediate Effect Of The Atrocities?

Part of the standard dynamics. And one of the reasons is that the harsher and more brutal elements on all sides are strengthened. That's what happens in any period of confrontation, and conflict, and violence, and it's true here, too. So just as bin Laden and his network would welcome a massive American assault, hard-liners in the United States are doubtless quite happy about the opportunities that this offers them. It offers an opportunity to further regiment the society, to prevent dissidents, to ram through their agenda: militarization more military spending, militarization of space, which is under the cover of missile defense, which is just a cover; and further attacks on social-democratic programs, welfare programs and so on. Right at this moment, while we are talking, they are trying to use it as an opportunity to eliminate the Capital Gains Tax and transfer wealth even more to very narrow sectors of the population. So of course there will be all these efforts, and a crucial part of it is cutting back dissidents, making sure nobody talks about it. Corporate globalization, problems of the poor, uninsured health people, environmental issues don't talk about any of that stuff, just follow orders and let us ram through our hard line agenda. It's a wonderful opportunity for that, and of course it's being exploited right in front of our eyes, and just what you'd expect.

RABBI MICHAEL LERNER

What is Going on Between Israel & the Palestinians?

Well let me put it to you this way: there is a struggle going on for two peoples trying to deal with one land, and the question is how that land will be shared. And there are people in each camp who have a maximalist perspective – both on the Israeli side and the Palestinian side – who say that it really should be entirely a Palestinian society and that Jews should go back to wherever they came from. And there are Jews that think it should be an entirely Jewish society, and the Palestinians should assimilate into all of the surrounding Islamic states since there are seventeen Arab countries and there is only one Jewish country. So those are the maximalist positions. And then there are those who want some kind of accommodation. And then the question is: What is the nature of the accommodation, in which both sides get part of what they want? And the nature of that accommodation could be a primarily Jewish-run society with a variety of autonomous regions in which the Palestinians get to run their own municipal affairs, or it could be a Palestinian state in which Palestinians would have substantial control over a significant part of the what was the pre-1948 Palestine.

Tikkun, the magazine that I'm the editor of, has taken a very strong stand in favor of a Palestinian state [that] would be created in all of the West Bank in Gaza that would share control over Jerusalem and that would work with hurdles to create a limited but real right of return for Palestinian refugees to the West Bank – from the West Bank in Gaza to the places where they had lived previously. So that's a perspective on what to do there; there's a struggle about these terms. And in the Camp David agreements that took place, or the Camp David meetings that took place, a year ago in August of 2000, there was an attempt to bridge the differences. And that attempt failed very much. And both the leadership – the liberal leadership in Israel, that is the peace-oriented leadership of the Labor Party and President Clinton – blame that failure on Arafat for failing to accept the deal that they were proposing but outright rejected. Now, they then portrayed this as proof that the Palestinians wanted nothing less than the total elimination of the state of Israel. And they had a great deal of support in that interpretation from the mainstream media because the mainstream media essentially repeated this story over and over again every time they dealt with Israel for the past year and almost never allowed the alternative perspective to be heard.

And that alternative perspective, which was told by the Palestinians and by those of us in the Israeli or Jewish peace movements that want a real reconciliation, was a very alternative story. Because what we said was that what was being offered to the Palestinians was an impossible deal that no Palestinian leader could possibly have accepted. That is to say, it was a deal that violated the original spirit of the Oslo Accords in 1993 that had promised a real Palestinian state. And instead, what it presented was, essentially, a series of independent cantons cut through by Israeli army roads, riddled with Israeli settlements. And beyond that, beyond that particular part of it, it did not offer Palestinians unimpeded access to their holy sites and did not offer Palestinians any solution to the 3 million Palestinian refugees who live in one of these refugee camps under horrendous conditions. So we thought, as did the Palestinians, that what was being offered was simply outrageous. However, most Americans, and in fact most people in the world, had no idea what the Palestinians were being offered because the media portrayed the situation in a very one-dimensional way that didn't allow their story, the alternative story, to be told.

What is it Like to Live Under the Israeli Occupation?

Well, living under the occupation under normal conditions means that people are subject to border crossings, searches sometimes if they want to go from the West Bank to work in Israel, which is the main place where there's employment available. They often have to go two or three hours early, go through these debilitating searches, and the same way coming back. So that you're adding on four, five hours a day to somebody's work world to get through the border crossings. It also means that Israel takes taxes from people in the occupied territories and gives it back only when it decides to and sometimes, as in the past year, not at all. But the occupation gets more intense when the settlers who live in the occupation start to, as they have frequently in the course of the past ten years, grab land that was adjacent to their settlements and say, "Oh we're going to create and extend our settlement here," taking land away from Palestinians and having to support that land grab, which is essentially stealing the land. So that's another element in the normal picture.

And then you had – when people rebelled against that, rejected it – then you had a really terrible situation in which people were either put into jail without any charges and left there – sometimes, an administrative detention was called for up to six months – or subjected to torture.

And this torture has been documented by the Israeli human rights organizations in *Salam [Review]* and it's also documented in *Tikkun Magazine*, but it rarely hits the Israeli press, and it never hits the American Jewish press or the American media: the fact that there has been ongoing torture of Palestinians. Now these are all under normal circumstances. In the past year since the Intifada-number-two began, you have a much heightened level of repression, and, in that case, it's not a question of going from your town or your village on the West Bank to work in Israel. Not only has that been cut off, but often these towns and villages are surrounded by the Israeli army, and people aren't allowed to go out of their village to next door, so it's as if you lived in Beverly Hills of Hollywood and you weren't allowed to go to Santa Monica or if you lived in the upper west side of New York and you weren't allowed to go to the Village. So these are heightened repressive conditions that lead to many, many instances in which people are denied the ability to go to the hospital that they need because it's in the neighboring town. The births have to take place – there have been many births that have taken place right at the checkpoints that are preventing Palestinians from going from one place to another. It's basically a horrendous situation; it's like living in a very big jail.

The Holocaust, Christian Guilt and the Denial of Palestinian Rights

Well, the media is very biased in the way that it covers Israel, and it doesn't tell the full story at all. And as a result, most Americans do get the impression that all Palestinians are terrorists and that ordinary Israelis are just innocent bystanders who surprisingly are being attacked by these Palestinians. Not to say that I think that terror is *ever* right – it isn't, and there's no set of circumstances that justifies it in my view. So I think that the Palestinians are making a big mistake when they revert to terror. But there is absolutely no understanding on the part of the American media, and hence on the part of the American population that's educated by that media, about what creates this circumstance.

And when you have a population that is being occupied, when their fundamental human rights are being systematically denied, when they're being subject to torture, when

they're not allowed to move from city to city or place to place without huge amounts of harassment, when they are denied representation, when they are given orders that make it impossible for them to make a living, when people are essentially in desperate conditions, it's not a surprise that they're going to be very, very, very angry and throw stones. And when they throw stones, they're met with overwhelming lethal force on the part of the Israeli army because it's not as if you've got two armies here – there's only one army in Palestine-Israel, and that's the Israeli army. And you've got the Israeli army against a bunch of kids throwing rocks, and a lot of those kids get killed. Then their parents, their friends, and so forth are outraged, and some of them become terrorists and take disgusting acts of terror that I think are unfortunate and immoral and unacceptable, but the context is never presented. The understanding of the situation is never presented.

I believe that this, in part, has to do with a legitimate guilt that Americans and, more generally the Christian world, feel about the way they betrayed us Jews during the Second World War. Because the fact of the matter is that during the Second World War, Jews were desperate to get out of Europe and the United States had its doors closed and wouldn't allow refugees to come here, and when shiploads of refugees came and arrived at the ports of the United States, those ships were turned back and told, "No. Jews can't come here." And, in fact, the United States' government and most other western governments did almost nothing to bomb the concentration camps, bomb the trains that were taking people to the concentration camps, doing anything to save us. And so, after, there developed a high level of what I'd call 'appropriate guilt' – because actually the anti-Semitism that flourished in Germany was the product of two thousand years of Christian anti-Semitism and of destruction of the Jewish people.

Now that 'appropriate guilt' that Christians feel about Jews has led to an inappropriate response; namely, to feel that they can't criticize the state of Israel when the state of Israel is doing something that is immoral and self-destructive as well as destructive to the Palestinian people. And that, I think, has debilitated an awful lot of very decent Christians in this country; in fact, the most decent ones are debilitated because they're the ones who're most aware of their moral responsibility for what happened in the past, but that moral responsibility is being played out in the wrong way because what we, the Jews who are part of the peace movement, need is strong Christian allies who would say to Israel, "Don't do this. Get out of the West Bank and Gaza. Allow the Palestinians their rights." And to say that in a loving but firm way to Israel, to tell Israel it absolutely cannot continue its current policies. That's what we need, and the reason we need it, we who are on the side of the Jewish peace movement, is because we can't do this without that kind of support; we can't pressure Israel in the way that Israel needs to be pressured.

Now why does Israel need to be pressured? Because that's in the best interest of the Jewish people, number one. The Jewish people's interests lie in reconciliation and peace, not in an endless hundred-year or two-hundred-year or five-hundred-year war with the Palestinian people. But, secondly, because the highest values of the Jewish tradition require from us that we create a society which embodies the values of love and caring: love your neighbor and love the stranger, and justice, justice shalt thou pursue. Central elements of Tora tradition that are articulated clearly in the Bible and that are being violated day by day in current Israeli reality. Now when that happens, it's bad not only for the Palestinians, [but it is also] bad for the Jews. It perverts the Jewish life, it undermines our moral core, and in the United States, it makes it extremely difficult to convince the next generation of Jews to remain true to their Judaism because the next generation of Jews looks and sees what's happening in Israel and they end up

saying, “What do I want to be part of that for, when I can just assimilate into American society and forget about my Jewishness and become one part of the rest of society?”

So it’s very destructive for those of us who want to keep Judaism alive and think that it has something of very great value to offer the world to find a society coming forward and saying, “We’re the Jewish society,” only they embody the opposite of the highest of Jewish values. But we can’t do that fight without Christian support, and we can’t get that Christian support because the media doesn’t give Christians any understanding of what’s going on and Christian guilt keeps them from standing up to Israel in a way that would be appropriate.

Well the interpretation that I’ve just given is not something that most people recognize, but most people do recognize that the Holocaust plays a very important role in contemporary reality of Israel. Because many, many of the Jews frame their situation through the experience of the Holocaust, and so they see the Palestinians as though they were embodiments of the Nazis and basically all of the education that we had that said, “Never again; we’re never going to allow ourselves to get wiped out again,” is now applied to this situation. And we see ourselves as being threatened, and that’s the incredible pathology of the current reality in Israel, that Israel is actually the far more powerful force, but it perceives itself as though it were about to be wiped out.

Now how did that happen? It happened because we in fact have been wiped out over and over again through our history, and most recently through the Holocaust. And as a result, we are trauma victims, and as trauma victims we see in front of us a reality, and we can’t understand what reality is. Instead, we see it through the framework of the trauma that we’ve gone through. And so I think that I have a lot of compassion for the Israeli Jews because it’s really understandable why they are unable to see the reality in front of them. On the other hand I have a lot of compassion for the Palestinians because they’re subject to a certain kind of brutality that’s based on their being seen throughout the framework of the Nazis rather than being seen through the framework of the actual reality of who they are.

Terrorism, the Media & the Crisis in Spirituality

Terror, understood as the attack of individuals against non-combatants in an enemy struggle, is most often the tool or the instrument of the powerless against the powerful, so it’s not a surprise to see terror being used by those who are relatively powerless. The Viet Cong used terror against the American-supported government of South Vietnam, and that was part of their struggle. I don’t support it; I think terror is always wrong, but terror has been used whenever people feel powerless to engage in any other form of struggle. So I don’t think it’s fair or true to identify this as somehow uniquely flowing from Islamic fundamentalism. In fact, terror techniques have been used in many, many struggles throughout world history and certainly in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In Israel, you find that the attack on civilians was something that was used by the Right wing of Israelis. In the 1980s, there was a thing called the *Machteret*, or the Jewish Underground, that went around killing various Palestinian leaders, but eventually, the mainstream of Israeli society said, “This is totally unright, should be suppressed.” And it was suppressed and people were put into jail, but many people who were put into jail were then later on given pardons by the president of Israel.

So, we shouldn’t think of terror as something that is just used by one side and not the other. Baruch Goldstein in [1994] went into a mosque in Hebron and killed twenty-seven Palestinians that were there praying. So these acts against civilians are not happening on one

side; it's just not true. What is true is that when the media discuss the issues, [they tend] to identify it as just an issue for Islamic fundamentalism and are not willing to give the same attention when it happens some place else, when it happens on the side of Israel for example.

And, if we look, for example, for the difference between the way of what happened – the horrendous terrible thing that happened at the World Trade Center – and the difference in how that was handled with how the bombing of the building in Oklahoma city [was handled]. Because in Oklahoma City, there was no attempt to suddenly raise the question of the network of Right-wing extremists in this country, to bring them into the media focus, to show what they were doing and to essentially galvanize people in a crusade of those Right-wingers. Much less any attempt to suggest that maybe we should bomb Montana or North Dakota, or wherever it was where these people were training. I mean nobody would've thought that. That's totally ludicrous.

But we think it is totally not ludicrous to do it when there are terrorists training in some other country. Why? Well because our media has a proclivity to thinking that the Right-wing nuts in the United States, that's part of us, whereas the Right-wing nuts in Islamic culture. . . but us, we can't bomb. So this is part of the fundamental problem – the way we understand our world. Because, from my perspective, as a religious Jew, all human beings are interconnected and interdependent and part of one. And so I don't see the difference between me and my Islamic brothers or sisters, or my Christian brothers or sisters, or people with different ethnic or racial backgrounds. But if you start making those divisions, if you start making those divisions and thinking that they are really, really the central reality, then you have a very different kind of reaction to similar acts of violence.

Of course, what happened in New York City was far worse than what happened in Oklahoma City. Still, what happened in Oklahoma City was that hundreds of people were murdered. So why wasn't there an outrage? And why wasn't the media focused in that direction? Well for the reason that I said. Because they were for us and not them. Now then, what happened was absolutely terrible, outrageous, immoral, disgusting. And I am a supporter of those who say that these people who perpetrated this should be brought to justice and punished and eliminated from society. They should not be allowed to function in any society, but at the same time, I think it's critical that we look at the spiritual crisis in our world that makes this possible.

And in my view, the violence that we're seeing now, that's taken the form of terror, is a direct outgrowth of larger dehumanization or desanctification of the human – an inability for us to see other human beings as created in the image of God and to treat them as though they were deserving of the same loving and caring and justice that we ourselves deserve. And this is the root problem. But that root problem isn't a problem [just] for fundamentalists; it's a problem for everyone all through the world. It's rooted in a worldwide system that looks at, that says that the bottom line is to maximize wealth and power for myself without regard to the consequences for others. Now that our economic and political system in the United States – it's not just in the United States; it's all over the world. It's a worldwide system. We are at the center of that worldwide system; we benefit more from that worldwide system than anybody else. And, in fact, we're amongst the biggest pigs; that is to say that we – 5% of the world's population – take 25% percent of the world's wealth. Now that's unbelievably piggy. And it has consequences.

Some people, when they start to talk about these underlying causes, they say something to the effect of, "We should be more generous with our wealth." But that's not what I'm saying; I'm saying that we should understand that our wealth directly derives from the lack of

wealth from other people in the world. That we extract the wealth from other countries and bring it back here, and this is part of our economic system. And we all benefit from the super-exploitation of people in other parts of the world. And this is a terrible reality that we continually hide from ourselves because the media makes it totally invisible. The media starts from the assumption that we're good, that everything that we're doing is fine, that there is no fundamental problem here, and it totally obscures the notion of a world system. So we are totally unaware that the prostitutes, that [the poverty of] children in third-world countries has something to do with the fact that we've extracted the wealth from those countries, that we've set corporations there that don't pay adequate wages.

A Nonviolent Palestinian Civil Rights Strategy

At the same time, I want to make it clear that from my perspective the Palestinian people have made a terrible, terrible error by not adopting the strategies of Martin Luther King and of Gandhi and of the struggle against the apartheid in South Africa with Mandela. Namely, in all of those struggles, a central thing that made it possible for them to win was the ability of the group that was struggling to convey to the oppressor group that they were still being seen as human beings and that the goal was not to wipe out all of the oppressor group. That was extremely important in South Africa, but that's what Nelson Mandela brought into the picture. He didn't bring into the picture an arm struggle that he was going to win. What he brought into the picture was the capacity to show whites that he was not out to destroy every one of them. The Palestinians have failed consistently to show this and have failed to try to show it. They don't understand the very important significance of non-violence. If they were to adopt a non-violent stance, the political dynamics of Israel would change within three to five years in a dramatic way, and they could win that struggle. They could get almost everything that they wanted if they were to adopt non-violence.

But, I'm not going to blame them in the sense of saying, "I don't understand why they're so angry that they can't considerate it." And certainly I understand the arguments that say, "Well, you can't demand of the oppressed group that they adopt these kinds of tactics when the oppressors are using other tactics." That's true; I can't demand it. But I can say that if they want to make a change, that would be the thing that would make the change. So when Martin Luther King came along, in this country there were people in the black world that said, "You can't demand that we be non-violent; we have every right to struggle with violence by any means necessary for our liberation." They had the right, but it wasn't real smart. And what was real smart was that the vast majority of blacks responded to Martin Luther King's strategy, and that strategy was one of reassuring whites that they were not going to receive the anger that they actually deserved but had earned – we had earned by virtue of treating blacks so badly – but nevertheless earned or not earned, we were not – a lot of whites were not – ready to give blacks their equality if they thought that equality would come with terror towards whites. So this need to reassure people, to give people a sense of safety and security, is very critical if you want to win the struggle. If you just want to be morally right, you don't have to do that. But if you actually want to win, you do have to do it.

And this is a tragedy that the Palestinians didn't go that direction. Now we've got the same situation on the global level with after September 11th. Now instead of being able to confront [globalized capitalism] and challenge it on simply moral grounds, we have to face the argument that many people will be feeling today in the United States and other parts of the

advanced industrial world – namely, that the anger is so irrational that even if it was based on a legitimate claim that right now is taking forms that will be destructive and hence it must be wiped out. So that complicates the task for all of us who are progressives because we, as progressives, want actually to transform the world and transform it in a way that makes it more loving. But you can't transform a world in a way that it's more loving if the people who are suffering are also acting in very unloving ways, because then the people who are doing the oppressing say, "Do you see? If we don't do this oppression, they'll act on us, the same way we're acting on them." There needs to be a break in that someplace.

Death Threats for Speaking Out About Palestinian Rights

Since I started standing up very strongly on this issue of the rights of Palestinians, I have received death threats almost every single day. And some of them were not credible, and some of them were credible. And, in fact, when it got to a level where people in our office at *Tikkun* were being harassed, some people even left working there because they felt really scared at the kinds of press we were receiving. When that started to happen, it became very hard to ignore those threats or to just shrug our shoulders at them. So, there is a systematic attempt to intimidate people who stand up. And certainly this has been the case with *Tikkun Magazine*. And one part of that intimidation is to say that any Jew who raises criticisms about a current Israeli policy is a self-hating Jew – that is we hate ourselves, we don't really believe in our Jewishness, we're ashamed of our Jewishness and so forth.

And I think that part of the reason why I, in particular, have received so much in the way of death threats is because it's so much harder to make that case with regard to my life since I am the Rabbi of a synagogue, since I'm an observant Jew. I won't pick up the phone on Shabbas. I won't engage in any activity on Shabbas. I won't go to a television interview on Shabbas. I won't do any of the things. I'm an observant Jew. Instead, I'm observing Shabbas – I don't eat meat; I follow the laws of Kashrus. So it's harder, to say, "Oh, well he's a self-hating Jew," so all the more anger that it generates because the Right Wing would love to be able to portray those of us who are critical of Israel as people who really are embarrassed about our Jewishness.

But, on the contrary, my criticisms and *Tikkun Magazine's* criticisms of Israeli policy flow directly from our commitment to Judaism and our love for the Jewish tradition and our insistence that it be taken seriously – not just a bunch of empty words, but as a set of principles that we really take seriously and believe in.

Atoning for Our Sins and Stopping Terrorism

What Israel needs is what the world needs. In response to September 11th, what the world needs is a day or a week or a longer period of atonement, of repentance of the sins that we have committed in being insensitive of building society based on selfishness and materialism, on looking out for number one, and maximizing money and power as our bottom line. And instead we need a whole new direction. I've said, I think I said it earlier here, maybe I didn't say it in this interview, but it's like this: if the United States wants to be effective in blocking the ability of these terrorists to recruit, then let the United States – instead of being seen as a force that has blocked every possible ecological treaty and opposed any restraints on global warming and has accumulated for itself a greater and greater wealth at the expense of a third world and has blocked human rights treaties and has been insensitive – let the United States be the leader, the

world's leading force for ecological sanity. Fighting for new restraints on emissions. Let the United States be the leading force for social justice and for redistributing the wealth of our own country, as well as the other advanced industrial countries, so as to build up the infrastructure of Third World countries so they would have an adequate material well-being. Let the United States be the force that sees it as an international emergency that 2 billion out of 6 billion human beings go to sleep every night hungry. Let the United States be the force that defines poverty as an international crisis that must be dealt with as the number one priority. Let the United States be the force in the world that challenges internally our own ethos of selfishness and materialism and says, "Instead of defining institutions as productive or efficient just because they maximize money and power, let's define them as productive or efficient to the extent that they maximize love and caring, ethical, and spiritual and ecological sensitivity and our capacities to respond to the world with awe and wonder at the magnificence of nature instead of seeing the world as simply something that can be sold and turned into ...or turned into a commodity."

Now let the United States be the force that is the force of open-heartedness, of love, of caring for our neighbors. Let that be the reality inside and outside, and the bin Ladens of the world will have tremendous trouble recruiting people to join in the struggle against the United States. That's not to say that those people will go away. Bin Laden is not a poor person; he is a rich person. Many of the people who joined him are economically not oppressed, but still where they recruit and where they swim, and they swim in a sea of support that is generated by the wrong role of the United States in the world. Let us have a period of atonement for the way we have been and transform ourselves from the most selfish to the most generous society of the world.

Now the same thing goes for Israel. Israel needs an atonement for what it has done, for the way it has failed to recognize the humanity, the sanctity of life, of Palestinians. It has to acknowledge that it was very much responsible, not solely responsible but just proportionately responsible, for the Palestinian refugees. And it has to in some way make recompense for those it has hurt. But that can only happen if the Israeli people open their hearts to the Palestinian people, and the Palestinian people simultaneously open their hearts to the Israeli people. What we need there is for both sides to articulate the story of the other side in a compassionate and open-hearted way. And that's the direction that we need to go. It's not military solutions; it's not political solutions. They will flow once we have opened our hearts to the other and recognize the spirit of God in each other.

NAWAL EL SAADAWI, M.D.

What does feminism have to say about these events?

I think what happened is related to everything, not only to feminism. It's related to class oppression, to race, to gender, to international politics, to history, to religion, to anthropology, to everything. So I think yesterday in my lecture [at Smith College] I tried to connect, because I believe very much in connections. Many people, especially very highly placed men, in the academia, they are gender blind. I have read many of what they have written about this event. The so-called progressive men: Left wing, Marxist, you know, and people against class and against American policy, and globalization, against imperialism. They are very good when they speak about economic oppression, but they are gender blind. And women are half the society, so how come we separate half the society from what is happening? So I always bring women's dimension and the gender dimension to any problem.

While this has happened, how can we describe the society that is breeding terrorism all the time? It is a classist, patriarchal, capitalist society, dominated by men, and dominated by a certain class the capitalist class, the military class, [and] they want profit, as much profit as they can. And they've created colonialism in the past, and they have colonial powers in the present, and globalization. This is all related to women of the society. Women are the weakest sectors of society; they are inferior in all religions. They are the first to die in war, [the] first to be dismissed from work when you have an economic crisis or unemployment. So women are there, everywhere, so why should we ignore them? That's the question.

I just [turned on] the television today, and I heard the news, that the troops at the border of Afghanistan, ready to hit, to make a strike. Now who will die? Women. Who will die in this war? Not bin Laden, not the guerilla fighters; it will be women, and children. Poor women and children happen to live there just because of poverty, so [they] are the first victims; nobody spoke about those, except very rare people. So why should you bomb? You have to know the target. But, just to fight like that, like the Gulf War for instance the victims in the Gulf War were women and children. You know, there are almost 5,000 children dying every month in Iraq because of the sanctions. And when you look at the statistics of the people who died in the Gulf War, most of them are women and children. But this is being ignored; it's not visible, somebody said, It disappears, quickly.

Peace & Justice

When I listen to the media [they] conceal facts more than say what's happening, because that's the policy, that's the strategy of the power that wants to exploit the others. So the ordinary people, the students, even the professors in universities, some of them say, We have to go to war! Fight; because there is no alternative. How to kill those terrorists . . . you know? So I think what we need now is political analysis.

First of all, why [did] this event happen, why? Why [did those] young men train themselves, fanatically and completely, and with no rest, [for] ten years, in order to die for their cause? Why did they do that? What is this hostility against the World Trade Center? What's this hostility against the Pentagon? Of course the hostility is not against the American people, no. It's against those symbols of hegemony, of capitalism, of military power at the Pentagon. So we have to ask, Why are they against that? Because they suffer from that, they suffer. So unless people

know the original, real causes of terror, and terrorism . . . And who created those groups; who created the bin Laden groups in Afghanistan? It was the United States. They created them to fight the Soviet Union and communism. And now, as I said yesterday [in a lecture at Smith College], the son is killing the father again, as what happened to Sadat in Egypt. He encouraged the Islamic fundamentalist groups, with the help of the U.S., and then they killed him. They assassinated him. I was in prison when Sadat was killed because I was against his policy and his collaboration with the U.S. to encourage the fanatic fundamentalist groups in Egypt (whether Christian or Muslim) and to divide the country and to have the so-called open door policy. And capitalist economy, and the whole story of the World Bank and IMF and all that. And the increasing debt, foreign debt, and increasing poverty all the results of globalization and neo-colonialism.

So, what [do] we need now, here? The people in America, and I think most of them, they have conscience and brain, and they are not satisfied with what they hear in the media. And when I read the newspaper, I notice that many students are revolting against the war, and they are calling for non-violent justice, which is very important. Because George Bush is speaking about Operation: Infinite Justice, you know. And he is speaking about justice now, he didn't speak about justice before; he was speaking about peace when we were killed in the Middle East, and with the Palestinians who are killed every day, he speaks about peace. He never speaks about justice. But now he is speaking about justice. But this justice must be non-violent, so the slogan Non-violent Justice is very important.

And, also the globalization from below, because most of the global powers are globalizing from above the IMF, the World Bank, and the Military. So people now need to globalize from below to fight against those powers that are exploiting you and me and everybody, whether in Egypt, or in the U.S., or in Europe, or anywhere So now we have a cause to fight for. We have to fight against, number one, violent justice. We are against violent justice. We are against war whether it is state war, official state war, or war done by other groups. We are against terrorism, whether it is done by state governments like Israel, or the U.S., or other groups. So we have to speak up, and really have the courage to say that, because many people, I have noticed here, that they are a bit afraid because of the event; they are a bit embarrassed to speak up because of the people who were killed. I know, because I shared the pain. You know, every day in Egypt, I opened my eyes before I came, in the last two years I open[ed] my eyes every morning [to see] Palestinians being killed, or Iraqi children dying, or people in Africa, or even in Egypt being killed by groups, different groups. Of course I was offended. I was angry; I had pain. The same pain as when I heard that the Americans in New York and Washington [D.C.] were killed. So it's human pain, humanity. We are against people being killed in any country, not only in America. But what really annoyed me with George Bush, that he was so angry because American people were killed, but he was not angry when Palestinian people were killed, and this is double standard. But, I am angry, and I am offended when people in my country or in Palestine are killed, and also I share the pain when American people were killed here. And that, I think we need that this human element, that we should fight against killing people in any country. We should fight against injustice in any country.

How can pain be productive?

One of my students said. . . I asked them, What do you think? And one of them because I teach creativity, so most of them are creative writers, and painters, and musicians he said, You know,

it's the first time I feel threatened. I was secure, and I felt that all the terror and war, it happens there on the soil far away in Palestine, in Egypt, in Rwanda, in Iraq, but not here. Not here at home. But now it's here at home. So now I am awakened, now I open my eyes that I should do something. You see? . . . I should fight against injustice; I should fight against war. I should stop my government from exploiting other countries economically or supporting the World Bank, or the World Trade Organization, or the IMF. So people, young people, started to open their eyes here in America. And, that is the positive element of the event. Because I think that in each crisis there are some positive and negative by-products. So the positive products of this event that many young people here in America started to open their eyes, and to be threatened, and that is the benefit of pain. Pain is very productive sometimes.

Globalization from Below

I was teaching in Seattle at the University of Washington in 1994 when the first conception of globalization from below came. And I discussed it with my students, and we said, in 1994 (because this was after the Gulf War), and we said that really, we need to globalize from below to fight against such wars, that . . . you know the Gulf War killed half a million people. We call it a war for the oil. It was not for liberation of Kuwait; it was a war for the oil. So we started to discuss globalization from below in Seattle since 1994. Then I was teaching in Florida at Atlantic University when the Seattle demonstrations happened in November 1999, and we communicated with the group there, and I was fascinated by what happened in Seattle in 1999. Then I attended a conference in Paris it was called One Year After Seattle and the globalization from below networks were very visible in Paris. People came from all over the world, transcending their nationality, their religion, their color, their gender, their race, their profession, their age, to say, No. No more capitalism. No more World Trade Organization. No more exploitation of people, which was marvelous. This was in Paris, it was last year I think, or the year before. So now, after this event, [it is] also positive that I am receiving E-mail in New Jersey from my friends in Florida, in Seattle, [at] Duke University (where I was teaching for five years), and many academic people, professors now becoming active in this, what we call globalization from below network. So this was positive.

We have to come together. We have to organize the network from below, to globalize from below, to fight, to eradicate. Because as a medical doctor, I don't believe in symptomatic treatment, I believe in radical treatment. To kill the germ, the original cause, we have to eradicate the original cause of terrorism. What is the original cause of terrorism in our world? Inequality between people, between nations, between classes, between gender, sexes, races inequality between people and nations. Also, the original cause of injustice is the oppression, it's the exploitation, it is the increasing poverty. Some people are multimillionaires, and some people are starving. The majority of people are starving, and now the wealth is in the hands of a few people, and the majority are starving. This is because of the economic policy of globalization, and capitalism, and imperialism. So unless we cure these original causes and try to have equality somehow and to diminish the gap between classes and gender and nations, we are going to have terrorism all the time.

Post-Modernism & Neo-Liberalism

If we come to post-modernism and neo-colonialism, I think they are two faces of the same coin.

And it is time to demystify the language of post-modernists, as I mentioned yesterday [in a lecture at Smith College]. I just gave one example about culture relativity, or culture politics, or identity politics, how some writers and philosophers, post-modern writers, they celebrate differences, and they say the twenty-first century, the main battle in the twenty-first century will be to maintain our cultural differences, et cetera, and cultural diversity. I disagree, because, of course, we are different. Men and women are different. Men and men are different. Americans and Egyptians are different. Muslims and Christians and Jews are different. Somehow, we inherited some of the divisions, but what we have to do not to celebrate differences, rather to celebrate the *similarities* between us. How we can transcend our differences, not how we can emphasize the differences; how [we can] undo divisions, not to celebrate divisions by religion or culture. So, I am very much against post-modern culture politics, in relation to diversity and differences and all that. Globalization from below means to undo the divisions by culture or religion or anything.

The Internet & Hope

I think the Internet (and E-mail) is a miracle, and it is in the hand of non-governmental people. Because the media was in the hands of the powerful; now the Internet is in our hands, the people who have no money. You can have a web page, you can have E-mail, even if you are poor. So that is very important, and I think this technology. . . I don't know what is going to happen after the discovery of the quark, after the electron, because now we'll have the quark the smaller part of the electron. So it will have much more velocity and energy than the electron, so maybe you'll have a revolution even much more important than the electronic revolution in this century. But, what is happening in these advances in science and in technology and in communication is a miracle, and it is in our hands. This will democratize the whole information system. That is how we communicate, we can communicate easily now. You know the television and the radio were in the hands of the government. In Egypt, for instance, I was censored. I could not talk on the television or the radio because it is owned by the government. But now they cannot own the Internet. No government can own the Internet! Or monopolize it. Or the web it's in the hands of the people. We need knowledge now, real knowledge, that is the most important. How can we unveil the mind? I spoke a lot yesterday [in a lecture at Smith College] about unveiling the mind. To unveil it, so that we demystify the language of post-modernism and neo-colonialism and give it [knowledge] through the web and the E-mail.

I am very hopeful. I am optimistic by nature, and this gives me power. I think hope gives a lot of power. I never lose hope, even when I was in prison and many of my colleagues were pessimistic and they said that We are going to die, and so we [will] kill ourselves. I was hopeful and said, No. We will survive, we'll come up, we'll come out alive. And, we came, and we survived, and I'm still surviving.

CYNTHIA ENLOE

Feminism & Rethinking National Security

I'm very much impressed by how much American feminists especially, and Americans in general, have to learn from listening really carefully to smart feminists in other countries. One of the things they've taught us is to really put national security in quotes, around both the "national" and the "security," and that when feminists look at these loaded words – "national," "security" – which are used to justify so much curtailing of civil rights, so much mobilization of military air and ground power – when "national security" are used, feminists have taught us [to ask], "So whose nation?" What is not used is "state security." Particularly in the United States, where the word "state" sounds kind of fascist. And so Americans aren't very good at talking about "the state." Most people in the world talk about "the state," and I think it makes them much smarter, but Americans talk about "administrations" – just like in the United States, we don't have 'regimes,' we only have 'administrations.' Everybody else in the world has regimes; we just have an administration.

So one of the things that they've really been helpful [in teaching us], these feminists in other parts of the world, is to say, "Well, who's included in the nation? How's the nation constructed?" Is the "nation" – which is a sense of horizontal community, which governments claim to be representing, but they use the word "national" because that has so much more of an inclusive idea – so when feminists talk about the nation, they always want to know, "Is the nation being held together by unequal relationships between men and women?" And you can tell that oftentimes people think that is what holds together a nation because they will talk about 'a threat to the nation' when women in fact want to have paid work. Or 'a threat to the nation' when women aren't willing to take part-time jobs for the sake of male full employment during hard times just like we're coming into now in the U.S. So the first thing that feminists have taught us to do is watch out for "nation" or "national" when it's used to justify any other word that follows it.

The second thing that we've learned from feminists in other countries – the word "security" is really problematic. Not only, "Whose security?" but what do you mean by "security?" What do we mean by "security?" In American English, "security" . . . Now, think of Security Studies, the Center for Security Studies – we all know that if you hear somebody is going to major in Security Studies, or going to go on for their graduate degree in Security Studies, or someone is going to be asked onto Ted Koppel because they are a Security Studies Specialist, we all know that means they are a military specialist. That is, the word "security" has become so tainted with, infused with, and the people who get their expertise from it say that it bolsters the importance of security by allying it with military. Women who've worked in welfare politics, in the anti-impovertization of women's movement, they know that "security" has many different meanings, and certainly the women, both in the U.S. and other countries, have taught us [that] the home is not a secure place for a lot of women, know that security is not just about how many tanks you have, or how sophisticated your air power is, but rather, what the basis of security is in one's every day life. So I think, taking both "national" and "security" and opening them for examination, for critical thinking, and for saying "Where is women's belonging in our nation? In that, where is women's access to genuine security?" It, all of a sudden, makes national security not just something that can be glibly used to justify anything, until women's relationship to both the nation and security are fully explained in a way that

women find reasonable.

I think since September 11th, but actually before September 11th, because we do have to think, “What led [to September 11th]?” And this is not justification; we have to be serious about explaining why so many people in the world feel so alienated from the projects that American citizens and their government undertake, and I think to understand that we have to understand that a lot of things that the American government has done, oftentimes with our support, collectively, is to destabilize people’s sense of nation. Because we play ‘divide and rule’ a lot. And the U.S., especially with the CIA, has played ‘divide and rule’ in countries all over the world, usually on ethnic and racial terms, but sometimes on class terms. And we also have so deeply undermined a lot of people’s sense of their own security, security that comes from a sense of identity. Security that comes from a sense of meaningful paid labor. Security that comes from a sense that they can trust the governments that are in power, and usually backed by the United States, but not necessarily very sensitive to their own people’s needs.

So thinking *before* September 11th. . . Again, we’re not talking about justification here; we’re talking about understanding and explaining, so we can all move forward. I think taking apart “national” and taking apart “security” really helps us make a better sense of how we got to September 11th. I think taking apart “national” and “security” *after* September 11th, particularly those of us who are making our lives *in* the United States, allows us to be really alert to the ease with which Americans have now come to accept military solutions in the name of national security. Whereas feminists say, “Well, whose security is really being enhanced by aerial bombing? Whose security is really being enhanced by the whittling away of laws to protect civil rights?” That means that since September 11th it’s really feminists who have, not the only, but have major tools for assessing, for thinking, and for imagining alternatives. Particularly alternatives for achieving justice. . .

Media, Patriotism & Silencing Women

I think the first time I became absolutely outraged at the most powerful media since September 11th was when CNN – which is supposedly an international world network, and in fact the origins of CNN were in “We will not portray ourselves as Americans.” Evidently, the first producer or head honcho had a policy that nobody on air could say “we” when they meant Americans because that would sound so parochial [to viewers] in Singapore or in Ecuador. But evidently, that’s obviously gone by the wayside and when CNN started putting up those banners – “America at War,” “America Strikes Back” – right under every one of their headings, I thought that was appalling. I thought it was juvenile, I thought it was parochial, I thought it was crass, and I thought it was completely unhelpful to viewers to watch.

No matter how complicated or sophisticated some of their news – you know Judy Woodruff is no fool – no matter how sophisticated and nuanced any of their actual coverage above the banner could be, the viewer. . . and this is, I’ve talked to friends in Santiago, in Chile. I said, “Ximena, is the CNN banner the same?” (Because she watches CNN all the time), “Is it the same there? ‘America Strikes Back?’” She said, “Oh, yes.” That really surprised me. I had no idea that CNN had shrunken to that extent. But no matter how sophisticated it is above the banner, a viewer watches it as if whatever they’re watching is a story about “America Strikes Back.” And if, of course, if you’re Canadians, who happen to be Americans – and this use of America, as if “Oh, that’s an unproblematic identity,” it’s even worse.

So I think the media hasn’t been terrific at all (the mainstream media). I think some of

the media that we think of as being – or at least thinking of themselves as being – more sophisticated have been amazingly masculinist. So if you look at the first issue that came out of the *New York Review of Books*. This is New York, right? *New York Review of Books*, and you know they could get anybody to write. I counted, well, friends of mine and I went and did what feminists do – we did a gender count. So, there were forty-four writers in that issue of the *New York Review of Books* right after September 11th. Out of forty-four, seven were women writers. And I'm not even saying they're feminists, just women. *The New Yorker*, another home of sophistication, another New York magazine, and of course a very special next issue after September 11th, and there it was three, one of whom was Susan Sontag, out of fourteen feature writers and I thought, "Oh, gosh I'd forgotten that there are no women in New York."

[And so I think] either the American-based media is either very caught up in the 'we-ness' of their reporting – which means they talk about "*We* couldn't find bombing sights" or "*We* are deliberately not bombing a trail for the Northern Alliance to move into Kabul" – *we*. And I thought, "Where did your professionalism go?" I don't even care if they're smart, just, "Where did your professionalism go?" And the second thing is, "Where is any feminist informed analysis?" And I don't mean that they have to have Katha Pollitt in every issue, although that would be a good thing, or Nawal el Saadawi as a feature expert. I don't even mean that, although that would be much better reporting. But it's simply, you know there is twenty years of the second wave and third wave of feminist understanding and analysis of how you talk about international violence and how you talk about foreign policy and how you talk about human rights. Couldn't they find somebody? And so I think they really make their viewers dumb, but they've [also] made themselves dumb. That's distressing.

Patriotism & the Flag

I think this is really something about American culture in particular. I don't mean that other cultures and other societies can't be chauvinistic; they certainly can. If you just think about the reaction of the British mainstream media and public during the Falkland's War – I mean it was chauvinistic to the max. So we don't have the corner on the market, but we are bigger, so when American culture and ordinary people in American culture really define patriotism – define grief in terms of patriotism, and patriotism in terms of shutting down serious discussion – I think we've got a very big problem.

I mean I'm very admiring of Barbara Lee, and, of course, she comes from a very important district in Berkley and Oakland in California. But what really interests me – and I'm not saying this from inside knowledge – what really interests me is so what kind of pressure do Barbara Boxer, who is well known for being able to speak independently, and Cynthia McKinney, the African American member of House of Representatives from Georgia, what kind of pressure could have possibly been on women politicians like that to go silent? And I just think – and I do hold them accountable – I want them to find their voices. Cynthia McKinney has been crucial in the move to get more laws against the international small arms trade; she is very self-conscious about militarism. And Barbara Boxer has been a long time critic of American militarism. So what forced them to go silent?

So, on the one hand, they're trying to find their voices now, mainly in hearings, and mainly around technical questions – because we in the American public will give people a little leeway to be critical if it's about Ashcroft's fifty-two proposals for narrowing civil liberties – and then people found their voices. Ted Kennedy found his voice, right? But when it's out there

making more public statements, the silence is still pretty deafening, and I think we are complicit in this. That is, these are elected officials; yes, I expect them to have more voice and to have more sense of responsibility of their role, but they obviously are feeling enormously pressured by what they perceive as their own constituencies shutting them down. Now, as far as feminists being able to find ways to speak – I’m working with the people at *Ms. Magazine* right now, because their next issue will be their December issue. And they’re really thinking hard, and they’re not going to be silenced. Now, they know that they take risks – you know, Marcia Galespie, the African-American feminist who is the Editor-in-Chief of *Ms. Magazine*, I mean, she is not going to stay quiet, and the other news editors there are very thoughtful, and they’re risk takers, but it’s hard.

I, myself, am very alarmed at the militarization of a national symbol in the sense of the American flag. Because when you think about other flags, some flags are quite militarized. I mean I think the British Union Jack has become. . . it doesn’t have to be, but I think it’s become quite militarized. Most of my feminist friends would not be seen with any Union Jack on their front door window or their lapel. But that is not true of the South African flag. It’s not true of. . . that’s interesting, we’d have to ask Dutch feminists, they probably wouldn’t show the Dutch flag. But, the American flag has become deeply militarized. But I don’t make assumptions; as a feminist, I’m more curious about women. So when I have been at events and a woman will be there with a little brooch, with a jewel, costume jewelry of the American flag. Several people, I think knowing what I think, some people I’ve worked with for years, will come up to me and say, “Now you know I’m wearing this brooch; I’m not in favor of war, you know, but I just had to find some expression to show solidarity and grief.” What’s difficult is that for all those people that have put flags on their windows or on their collars, who don’t mean it to be war-mongering as a symbol, it’s taken in the general public to be support for a militarized response or to be support for a presidentialist, centralized government notion of what’s good for us, and that’s very worrisome.

And it silences, not just feminists who are trying to be out there in magazines or at rallies, but it silences that woman who picked up a piece of costume jewelry. Nuanced, complicated feelings because she will be seen by others as having only one feeling, that her grief is patriotic grief and that patriotic grief must mean that she is in this government’s military response to the people in Afghanistan who have suffered twenty years of our mucking around in their lives. In my household, we’ve decided that we wanted to put out some expression, and we tried to think about it, so we – my partner and I – we found that we had one of those beautiful earth flags – you know the beautiful Earth Day flags, that have the dark blue background and that has the earth kind of floating out there in the universe and the good thing is there are clouds over, so you can’t tell what continents are showing, right? So we found that we had one of those big cloth flags, so we put that over our front balcony, and it feels right for a couple reasons. One, it feels like it’s some public expression; it doesn’t feel as though it is an adversarial response to the American flags that our neighbors have put out. But it feels like maybe it will give people an alternative kind of expression. All these little gestures – they take thinking, don’t they?

Learning from Afghan Feminists

I think one of the things we need to all do, internationally and in the U.S., is we need to really think seriously about what we can learn from Afghan feminists. The women in RAWA, which is the Revolutionary Association of Afghan Women, they’ve been thinking about what a

new government in Afghanistan might be like. They're trying to think about what it means to have a secular state which allows for freedom of religion but is secular in its use of state authority. They've been trying to think about how women's literacy is crucial to democracy, how women's health care is absolutely essential for women being able to live the life of full citizenship. And I try a lot, I mean I'm not an expert on Afghanistan, but I've been trying a lot to listen wherever I can to the expressions of Afghan women, many of whom are in exile but some of whom are working underground in the refugee camps in Pakistan and still in Afghanistan itself.

But here's the caveat, and it's a really important caveat that I think that we all really need to take on board. One thing we've learned from feminists in other countries is that sometimes the militarizers, who can be the media or the intellectual elite or government officials, sometimes the militarizers will adopt – in the worst sense, not the best sense – will adopt women's rights to justify their militarized response. And we can see that happening in the United States. That is that our government and the media and intellectuals and even people who tell jokes – all the jokes about bin Laden coming back as a woman – right, as if that's the ultimate revenge. And everyone who tells those jokes, they've all of a sudden taken on board that the conditions of Afghan women are important. They're important to joke about, they're important to use in formal speeches, they're important to make asides to or show images of in the nightly news, as if all of a sudden Afghan women's condition is something we all care about. And that makes me very nervous because I think it's being used to justify our military response without ever asking any of the Afghan feminists actually what they think.

And that's the militarization of women's rights: to use women's alleged, benighted, deprived situation in one country to make us feel more civilized and therefore more justified into taking whatever actions we come up with in the name of their liberation. Whereas what feminists have taught us, and this is now over the last one hundred and fifty years – at least since the 1850s – is that if one really cares about women's rights in another community, in another ethnic group, or in another county, then the first thing you do because you care is you start listening and you start affecting your own behavior by what you hear from those women because they're smart. To be deprived of rights doesn't mean you're foolish or uneducated. To be deprived of rights means just that – you're deprived of rights. So the first thing that needs to happen if anyone says they care about Afghan women's condition is make sure they're part of the rebuilding of Afghanistan; and second of all, *stop* the bombing immediately until you ask those women if they thought bombing was the best way to improve their conditions in the world.

MICHAEL KIMMEL

Revenge & Vulnerability

I think that one of the most interesting stories of what has happened since 9/11 is that we waited such a long time between the 11th of September and the 4th of October, when the bombing started. One of the things I think that that did was it cleared out a kind of space; what that indicated was that our government was working a lot behind the scenes, but what it did was it created a sense of restraint. In that moment, it enabled people, and especially I think *men*, to do something that we've never done before – which is stayed with feelings of being vulnerable and afraid, rather than taking vulnerability and doing what men usually do with feelings like vulnerability and fear, which is we turn them immediately into the only emotion which is legitimate for us: anger. Nobody I think predicted two or three days after September 11th that we would be waiting such a long time to begin the bombing, or begin the invasion. I think that cleared out a space for a kind of conversation in the United States that we haven't had very often about what do we want to happen? How do we want it to happen? While politicians were scurrying around making sure all of their diplomatic pieces were in place, I think the American people had a conversation that we've never been able to have about a war before.

One of [the topics of conversation] was the nature of vulnerability. What does it mean, how do we feel? How do we feel? What would be an appropriate response? How do we want to respond? On September 11th, I was actually in Houston, Texas, on a runway at eight in the morning Central Time, second in line for takeoff. So I was in the middle of the country, actually in the South, and drove...ended up driving back two days later, through the American South, back up home to New York. All through the middle of America, the impulse to revenge and rage was so intense it was almost palpable. What you heard on Radio Shows was, “Y’know we should drop an atomic bomb now, take out Saddam Hussein while we’re *in the neighborhood*.” It was a whole, immediate revenge – take all of those feelings of fear and vulnerability, and externalize them. And then when it didn’t happen, I think the conversation shifted. From catastrophic revenge to targeted planning, to staying with feelings of vulnerability. Now unfortunately that’s different; those feelings of vulnerability are different from [the] feelings of terror, fear, panic, hysteria that’s going on at the moment about say Anthrax or Small Pox. That’s a different sort of thing because you cannot immediately translate that into a revenge fantasy.

How does “gender” help us understand 9/11?

There are a couple of very interesting things I think about the way gender is playing out here; I wanted to mention a couple of them. One thing that is really striking is the way in which the government proclamations about the importance of the war and purpose of the war and the purpose of the invasion suddenly are taking on a sort of feminist veneer, which is to say, “This is all about the abuses in human rights in Afghanistan, *particularly to women!*” Suddenly, our government seems so concerned about what the Taliban does to women; they weren’t concerned about it three months ago, but now suddenly there is this significant concern about the impact of the Taliban. Now feminists have been talking about this for quite some time, so there is an appropriation of a kind of feminist discourse. Now it can’t go too far because then we’ll get into the realities of the ways in which our government is also undermining the rights of women

here. So we can't push it too far. It is interesting how every news report we keep hearing about the abuses of the rights of women *particularly*.

The second thing that's interesting, from a gender perspective, is the way in which in the United States, historically we have always seen religion as feminizing. The images of the clergy have always been of sort of "wimpy" guys. Men who weren't *real men* – not "Big," "Powerful," "Brawny," "Works-with-their-hands," but in fact, *ladies' men*. They minister to congregations of women. From the nineteenth century on, there were campaigns in the United States to get men *back into church*. From the Muscular Christians of the turn of the twentieth century to the Promise Keepers of today, there have been constant efforts to get men back into church, because church or religion was seen as feminizing, and men weren't coming. That's been true for a century. It's so interesting that now, what we are hearing about Islam, or particularly about the Taliban's use of Islam is that it's gendering for men to be ultra-religious. That is a confirmation of masculinity – that there's a whole discourse about proving your masculinity by your willingness to sacrifice and willingness to die for the religion, and you become a real man by doing this.

The gendered hysteria that we've heard, for only a few moments, if you remember, we heard for only a few moments, some of the hysteria that was part of the hijackers' ideas about what would happen to their bodies. I heard for example, that prior to the crashes, the men before they even got on the plane, they wrapped their penises in gauze so that they would be protected. Mohammed Atta's last will and testament (I don't know what he was thinking about what would happen to his body) – he said no women/menstruating women could come near his body. No women could come to his funeral. No women could touch his body, especially touch his penis after his death. First of all, there's a fantasy about... that his body would even be discoverable. But secondly, the hysteria about the genitals, the hysteria about women being there, the polluting influence of women, indicates that this was a real moment for him. I don't know if you've seen pictures of him, but he was quite slight, quite small. In my sense, this was the greatest moment of his masculine glory, and I think this is true of a lot of, or a large number of, the volunteers – they see this as a very masculinizing moment. They immediately ascend to heaven to be surrounded by virgins. So there is another element of this, which is the gendering process of being a suicide bomber, sacrificing your life. It is very different from the way we always understood religion.

The third thing, the third part of it that seems to me to be interesting, is that it makes our critique, the critique that the Left and feminists have often had of traditional masculinity, far more complicated. Two months ago, firefighters were the enemy. Two months ago, firefighters were the last vestige of the fraternity-lockerroom-fratboy-clubhouse-no-girls-allowed, the most fiercely resistant organization to women's entry into the labor force, the ones that were the most difficult for women to penetrate. Now firefighters are like heroes; you know you see pictures of people weeping at the sight of firefighters. So that has really transformed things. And why? Because what we have heard is that what we always critique as traditional masculinity actually has some enormously heroic virtues to it. The willingness, for example, to sacrifice your life – the selflessness, the willingness to face danger and die for it.

The other thing that made it more complicated is that the World Trade Center was a fascinating conglomeration of working people who worked on the elevators, worked in the dining rooms, the restaurants and also some of the richest people in New York City who worked as 'ultra-brokers' and trades people at Cantor-Fitzgerald for example. These were people with enormous salaries and massive bonuses. All of these different classes, all there. And what

happen[ed] when the plane [hit were] two things. One, these men, these “Captains of the Universe” – “Masters of the Universe” Tom Wolf calls them in *Bonfire of the Vanities*. What is the first thing they do? They call their wives on their cell phones and they say, “I love you. I love the kids.” One man says to his wife, “Listen, I know what is going to happen here. You do what is best for you.” The code here: *Get remarried, live your life*. [It] was enormously interesting to me that the first impulse from all of these very traditional men was to call their wives and say, “I love you.”

We heard stories about one guy, who saw a woman trying to get down the stairs, but her wheelchair wouldn’t fit. He picks her up, and he carries her sixty-eight floors down to the bottom, hands her off to a rescue worker and walks away. Never tells her his name. Another guy, whose friend is quadriplegic, he’s down on the stairs, he’s two floors down. He realizes that his friend is never going to get out, and he goes back upstairs to die with him. I mean, these are stories that make you weep, . . .and [these are] displays of traditional masculinity that are magnificent. So it means that our analysis of traditional masculinity has to be a bit more complicated than it has been. You don’t just dismiss all of the current to the bellicose saber-rattling, as that much you know weenie-wagging. I mean it’s really a lot more complicated than that. There are some virtues in traditional masculinity that I don’t want to throw out any longer so casually. I think there’s a lot of value to some of what happened, and I think that our response to it has also recognized that our old understanding of it was really quite simplistic and one-sided, one dimensional.

Similarities between the hijackers and the American extremist right

I want to draw some links if I can, just for a minute, between some of the background variables that are emerging very slowly from what we know about the hijackers, what we know about some of the Taliban, what we used to understand about the Iranian revolution in the late seventies or early eighties, the backgrounds of those people, the fiercest supporters. I’ve just recently been reading a little bit about sort of Pakistan oppressors and some of [the Pakistani anti-U.S. protesters]. My hunch is that there’s going to be a demographic profile that is going to emerge from Afghanistan, Iran twenty years ago, Pakistan today, that is not that dissimilar from the demographic profile that we see for example among Basque nationalists, among Catalan nationalists and among the far Right. I think that some of the arguments that have been made about . . .different levels of backlash – [that] this is a backlash against globalization. It’s both a very specific experience of Afghanistan and our policies in Afghanistan and reaction against that. It’s also the more generalized response to American values, American culture, the dissemination, the spread of sort of the coca-colazation of the world.

But I think also it’s a class background. The background of the white Iranians in the U.S. is that they all virtually – all of the ones I can find – are the sons of lower middle-class, independent shopkeepers, independent farmers, skilled craft workers, all of whom have been downsized by globalization. These young sons now face a future as, utter you know, at best proletarians. At best, you are sort of skilled/unskilled workers. The family farm – all their fathers are the ones who lost the family farms. All of their fathers are the ones who have been downsized and de-skilled from highly skilled union shops or have lost the ma and pa grocery store. Or who used to hang out the sign that would say, “Kimmel and Son Hardware”; no longer. It’s the son – it’s the rebellion of the sons against, in many ways, the ineffectiveness that they perceive of their fathers to hold on to their birthright, their entitlement, their legacy.

One of the most interesting letters that I've read was a letter to the editor written to an upstate newspaper, a Buffalo newspaper, in 1993 by a young guy who had just come back from the Gulf War. And he writes this sort of raving letter about how globalization, NAFTA, and all of these things are destroying American, white, working men. Because it's taking away their right to earn their living with their hands, [to own] their own farm, [to own] their own store.

What [has] happened now is that we have no future; we've been completely deprived of our birthright. The writer of that was Timothy McVeigh. And he wrote that three years before Oklahoma City. And it seems to me that that's a similar kind of analysis from Mohammed Atta. He lived with his father; he grew up in a fairly rundown area. Although his siblings are all doctors, he's the one who wanted to be an architect, but he couldn't get a job as an architect.

Except if he wanted to work for a firm that was working to basically level traditional housing for nice tourist vistas or for you know sort of basically doing architecture for the tourist industry. I mean he couldn't get a job doing what he wanted to do. He was being downsized, constantly having to retool himself. The reason he went off to Germany originally was he was retooling himself for a different kind of draftsman job. He was downwardly mobile. His father was a prominent industrialist, I think, but they lived in a fairly shabby neighborhood in Cairo. And the reason for that was because he was downwardly mobile.

Think what we're hearing – these stories of the masculine gendered response to downward mobility by lower middle-class men. The revenge of the sons against the state that has feminized their fathers, taken away their birthright. Toward the global system. Which is why in this kind of ideation, you often see the international Zionist conspiracy hovering around it, you know basically playing all of the marionettes. You see the reaction against affirmative action, the reaction against democracy, the reaction against feminism, gay liberation, civil rights, because it takes away their positions, their entitlement. So I do see some links between those groups in the Middle East and in South Asia to what I see in the far Right of the United States.

SETH ACKERMAN

Fear and Retribution

Whenever you have a situation like this where every minute of the media's coverage is devoted to talking about it [and] showing pictures of people dying, it's going to elicit strong emotions from people. And that's absolutely as you would expect it, as you would want it. The amazing outpouring of emotion in the country was the healthiest response that somebody could imagine. People were seeing pictures of ordinary people, the type that they meet everyday, facing a terrible situation in which thousands have died. And all of the rallying to the cause of uniting America is partly an expression just to fellow feeling. People want to express the fact that they sympathize and have compassion with the people who are in this terrible situation.

They wanted to show if the same thing had happened to them, there is nothing that they can do to make the problem go away, but they want to help out however they can. They donated blood, and even the flags, which to some people is an indication of kind of a bellicose nationalism I think to most people it is really their way of expressing the idea that they're rallying together to help people who are in a serious situation. That is the response that most people have had to seeing what they've seen in the media everyday, where you have these pictures of buildings blowing up and people dying.

There's more of a difficult question in figuring out how the actual reporters, commentators, and pundits have been reacting. There you have more of a complex situation, because there has always been among the media, the talking classes, a very hawkish sensibility about how America ought to conduct its foreign policy. That was something that existed before September 11th, and it's something that exists today, and a lot of people in the media have used the attacks as a way of ratcheting up the type of rhetoric that they felt that they might not have been able to get away with before.

And indeed a lot of the talk that we've been hearing from respected, or at least respectable, people on TV has been nothing short of monstrous. We've seen people like Bill O'Reilly on Fox News Channel talking about and you hear this a lot from people talking about the proper response to this is to go into a list of the following countries and carpet bomb civilians, destroy their infrastructure, and make them starve, literally make them starve. It's even something that you see from people who are a little bit higher on the media food chain, like A.M. Rosenthal, who used to be the executive editor of *The New York Times*, and now he writes a column for *The Daily News*. And he said more or less the same thing. He said, Here is a list of countries. We ought to make a set of demands and if they don't comply, then we're going to go in and destroy their countries and reduce them to rubble and so on. Now the amazing thing about that is, and I think what should be the obvious aspect of that type of rhetoric, is the fact that it seems to legitimate exactly the horror that is supposedly motivating A.M. Rosenthal and Bill O'Reilly to say these things. They see the pictures on TV of civilians dying, and their response is immediately to endorse and encourage more civilians dying.

Now certainly it's understandable that things like that happen. Whenever something terrible happens, a lot of people's first reaction is vengeance. But the fact that we're hearing that from people that we're supposed to be looking to as the calm, informed and rational voices in the media is something that we should all be a little bit concerned about. If anything, the reactions that you hear from people on the streets, at least I do when I walk down the street, are far more rational and considered than what we've been hearing from people like A.M. Rosenthal and Bill

O'Reilly.

People say, It's a terrible thing that happened; I want to figure out a way to bring the people who are responsible to justice and make them accountable, but I don't want to see more people dying. In fact, you know, personally, as somebody who lives in New York City, I feel like walking down the street. . . The reactions of people here have been much more restrained and introspective than in the rest of the country. If only because people in New York City, myself included, have seen firsthand what the consequences of war and destruction and violence are. It's one thing when you see it on TV, sitting in your living room in Iowa, but it's another thing to actually experience it, to go out on the streets and see what happens when thousands of people die, when buildings are destroyed. And I think that gives people here in New York City a little bit more pause before they start talking about how we ought to do exactly the same thing in some other country. So, I find that in some ways encouraging and some ways discouraging.

Why Do They Hate Us?

It's a complicated thing to talk about and there have been debates even among people on the Left who normally rally to try to prevent or stop wars because in this case we have a situation where, first of all, we don't know exactly who's responsible for this, at least we don't know with any kind of certainty. Obviously, the media are telling us that Osama bin Laden and his network of operatives are responsible, and that may well be the case, but we don't know exactly what the facts are. So it's hard to say what exactly the causes of this are when we don't even know the perpetrators. But having said that, I do think there is obviously an effort by a lot of people in the media, and this goes back to what I was saying earlier, about the kind of pre-existing agenda of a lot of people in the media regarding foreign policy. This played right into the arguments of people who have always said that we ought to step up, for example, our military policy against Iraq. Or we ought to step up our support for Israel's military. And part of that rhetorical campaign is to say that these attacks, these terrible things that have been done are the consequence of Islam, and political Islam, and the Muslim world, and the Arab world.

In some sense, even though one rarely will find somebody willing to come out and say this, the strong implication is that the Arab world or the Muslim world at large is responsible for this. And yet, what's amazing is that even when you look at the reaction of people in the Arab and Muslim world to what happened, it is so difficult to find people in any kind of responsible position even people who have, what we in the States, and certainly the media, portray as very extremist views it's almost impossible to find somebody who is willing to say, This was a good attack. I approve of this, this was a good thing. We hear again and again and again from people who consider themselves Islamic militants and activists in their own country, whether it be Egypt or Saudi Arabia or wherever saying, you know, I have to condemn this kind of attack because it's un-Islamic, because it's un-Islamic to kill innocence. And I think that that points to the fact that there does exist, even among people with different political ideas, a certain basic core of principles, that you don't kill innocent civilians. However able people are to kind of rationalize their position, people like Bill O'Reilly on TV where he's saying, We should go and starve the population even he had to stop for a second and say, Of course, we shouldn't target civilians. So it's very difficult to find people who are willing to support what was done.

But it's also true that in the eyes of the U.S. government and the policy makers who are sitting around in Washington trying to plan their responses to these attacks, it really doesn't make much difference whether an individual or a group or a government actually supports what

happened in the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. It doesn't make much difference at all, because there is this larger movement of political Islam that U.S. policy makers are concerned about and are opposed to, and have for years been trying to take steps to suppress. And the reasons for that have very little to do with democracy or freedom or the rule of laws, and you can see that more clearly in the countries where those militants are most active. I mean there are countries like Egypt and Saudi Arabia and Jordan, where the official governments are completely undemocratic, and yet they're supported to the hilt by the United States, which gives them huge amounts of weaponry aid, military and civilian aid. And it's the Islamic opposition movements that are trying to overturn those governments, or at least to gain some influence in them. And they're the ones who are always trying to win more influence in the government for parliament, for elected parliaments, and for constitutional reforms. Some of these people have relatively moderate theological and political views, and some have more extreme views, but it's ironic that these are, in some ways, the enemies of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. And yet, they're the ones who are trying to reform extremely undemocratic secular regimes in the Middle East. That is something that you're not seeing in the media, and it's certainly not something that you're going to see in a speech by President Bush in front of Congress.

In reading about how Bush prepared that speech to Congress, it was interesting that one theme he told his speech writers he wanted to discuss was: Why do they hate us? and try to give an answer to that, so he could explain to the American people why this attack happened. And the words that the speechwriters came up with, you saw very clearly, it was they hate us because we're good. And obviously nobody thinks that way; even people who are evil don't think that they're going to attack the enemy because the enemy is good. And certainly the broader movements, Islamic movements in the Arab and the Muslim worlds, certainly don't think that and, if anything, condemn the United States because they feel the U.S. is supporting undemocratic regimes in those countries and is not respecting human rights when they support Israel's military, when they support repressive regimes in the Gulf. So that is one aspect of the rhetoric where you really have to examine reality apart from how our political leaders and our media pundits are presenting the situation.

Revenge and Retribution

Well, it is interesting that there was so much support in the media for the arrest and trial of Slobodan Milosevic, a year ago and to this day. And you'd hear columnists or you'd read columnists, you'd see people on TV constantly saying [that] this demonstrates our commitment to the rule of law, that this man is probably guilty of massive war crimes. And our response is that we're going to arrest him and bring him to justice in a fair trial. But when it's a matter of crimes that were committed against Americans, in this case, and when foreign policy makers want a different response, they want a military response. Suddenly the option of that kind of judicial responsibility is almost taboo; it's almost impossible to bring that up as an option. So that's one option. You know of trying to determine who did this and bring the perpetrators to justice. It's something that some commentators in other countries bring up. To take one prominent example, Robert Fisk, who is a reporter for *The London Independent* in the Middle East, a veteran Middle East correspondent, and who is known as kind of a renowned expert in the Middle East in England and Europe. [He] has been hammering away at this idea in his columns in the *Independent*, saying that we ought to bring the perpetrators to justice; if that means bin Laden, then we should bring him to justice.

A military strike in the media, it seems to be the only option, but you have to look at what the record of military retaliation has been to terrorism in the past. The closest analogies that we have from recent history were things like the terrorist attack on the American Embassy in East Africa in 1998, where the response was a military strike cruise missile strikes that Bill Clinton launched against Sudan and Afghanistan. Not only did they not hit their intended targets, [but also] they destroyed a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan that provided something like half of the medicines in Sudan. It generated a huge amount of outrage in the Muslim world, and if bin Laden was responsible for that attack, and bin Laden was responsible for this attack, certainly it shows that the first one didn't deter the second attack, that the first retaliation didn't deter his latest attack. Even the case of Libya, where in the 80s the U.S. accused Libya of sponsoring terrorist attacks against U.S. servicemen in Europe the retaliation for that was bombing Libya, which killed Quaddafi's daughter but apparently didn't kill Quaddafi himself did that work? Well, if you believe the U.S. government, a couple years later, Quaddafi sponsored the terrorist attack against the Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland. So we've never really heard of any cases where retaliation against terrorists has worked. I would be more than interested to see a discussion of that, but so far I haven't seen any evidence [that] people who have been arguing in favor of a military response have been able to provide.

So these are all very complicated issues, and what they need most in the media is kind of a calm, considered, rational debate, and that's exactly what seems to be taboo in the media. Because if you try to be analytical about what's happening, then people immediately accuse you of being callous toward the victims. When it seems that if you're really serious about preventing these terrible things from happening again, the thing that you'd want most is to have an analytical, calm and rational approach. So I hope we can see that from the media in the future. I think a lot of media outlets were showing that footage.

The Palestinian Celebration

One question that's come up a lot is the footage of Palestinians, a group of Palestinians celebrating the attack on the World Trade Center. And that was footage that was shown on a lot of the TV networks. Obviously, it's ironic that in a media environment where the views, beliefs, and political cultures in Arab and Muslim countries is almost off the radar screen, you don't hear almost anything about the debates over policy and over politics in countries like Jordan, or Saudi Arabia, or Egypt. You don't hear almost anything about that on CNN, but as soon as you can find some evidence that some small group of Arabs have been expressing their views that everybody would find repellent, that footage is on the television twenty-four hours a day.

It should go without saying that most Palestinians, as far as all the reports that I've seen are concerned, were horrified when they saw what happened in New York, as almost anybody would be. And what was amazing to me was that not only did Yasser Arafat condemn the bombing and the attacks in the strongest possible terms and even donated blood (for the cameras) to the victims, but even the radical Islamic opposition groups in Palestine, like Hamas, denounced the attacks in very strong terms and said that this was un-Islamic and that they don't support them. So the reaction among virtually the entire spectrum of political opinion in the Palestinian territories has been to condemn these bombings, yet we see much more of this footage of a group of ten or fifteen people celebrating, even though it's not even clear what they think that they're celebrating. I mean I've heard reports that [at the time that this footage was filmed], it was immediately after the attacks and nobody had seen any pictures yet of what had

happened of the devastation; nobody there knew exactly what had happened. In these people's minds, all that they knew was that after years of getting bombed by Israel and in their eyes getting bombed indirectly by the United States getting attacked where hundreds of Palestinians have been killed, just in the past year, indirectly by the United States, because every time an attack happens in a Palestinian town they find American weaponry on the ground in the rubble. That after years of this and feeling impotent that they have no power to strike back at the United States, which has never suffered an attack itself, finally in their eyes somebody has managed to strike back at the United States. That was how they presumably saw what happened. It's horrible; it shows exactly the kind of mentality that gets produced by daily violence.

But I remember when I was in junior high school during the Persian Gulf War, where hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed in Iraq during those attacks and I remember showing up to school and seeing kids walking down the hallways with T-shirts: I'd fly 10,000 miles to smoke a camel, with a picture of an Arab guy on a camel in a target site. And these kids in suburban Washington weren't suffering from IDF, Israeli Army, bombing raids on their houses everyday; these were just kids who turned on the TV and saw their country at war and decided the way they would rally behind it was to apparently cry for more blood. That's a response that we see in every society, but obviously to a lot of people in the media, who are showing that footage again and again, and talking about it endlessly, the lesson to draw from it is that Palestinians or Arabs are inhuman, or lack human compassion or human emotion. I'm not sure if I think that the fifteen-year-olds dancing in the streets celebrating the attack is worse, or if that view of Arabs is worse it's hard to say.

SUT JHALLY

The Best and Worst of Us

In the days since September 11th, we've seen, I think, really the best and the worst of America. The best is the heroism, the dedication, the bravery of rescue workers and medical personnel as they've tried to deal with the human costs of this atrocity. There is also the sense of compassion, and volunteerism, and sharing of both New Yorkers (who would have guessed that?) as well as people all over America. It really has been, at one level, awe-inspiring to witness that sort of coming together. But we've also seen, I think, the worst of America as well. There's been a sort of blind rage and anger, not among everyone, but among large sections of the population, at the world out there. It's not quite clear who the out there is; it doesn't seem to particularly matter. There is what many people have called violent blood-lust among large sections of the American public, and it seems they will only be satisfied if someone foreign, preferably brown, is dying, and dying violently and spectacularly.

It is really disturbing how guilt or innocence seems to have nothing to do with it, that for some people it doesn't matter who dies. But something must be done, and there has been a lot of talk about how the bar needs to be raised so high that no one will think about doing this again. That is, the cost of doing this has to be so high that it will determine our own future. If the cost of that is innocent lives, then so be it. This is, of course, essentially a terrorist mentality and morality. I am sure it's exactly how bin Laden and his followers are talking: Well we're going to kill six thousand people, but this will show America that they shouldn't be in the Middle East. I mean that is an essentially terrorist mentality and morality, and if America does this that is, launches an attack that kills innocent civilians, whether it is in Afghanistan or around the world then it will be no better than the butchers of September 11th, who also didn't care how many innocents would die as they too, in their own words, raised the bar.

So there has been this turning out of anger, external to the country. There has also been this anger and frustration within the country as well; it has been turned inward, the frustration, and rage, and racist anger that's been turned on what we could call the internal other people who look Muslim or people who look Arab. We've already started to hear about how these attacks are influencing people around the country. We know there are at least two people already dead as a result of this. It is really ironic, in fact, because Muslims constituted eleven percent of the victims of the attacks on September 11th and they only constitute two percent of the American population. So in one sense, they've already borne a huge burden of this tragedy.

Obviously the immediate stimulus is the attacks of September 11th. But there was lots of fertile ground before that even happened. Remember the idea of retaliation and revenge started even before we knew who did it. Actually, we still don't really know [who did it]. There has been a lot of speculation, but even before that speculation, there was this notion of retaliation and revenge against Arab people. Where does that come from? I think it's a combination of two things. On the one hand, there is what Edward Said calls a long history of Orientalism: whereby the West has always told a particular story about the East and about the Orient, in which the Orient and the people who look different from us are much more primitive, they are much more barbarous. There is a long history of that that goes back to the beginning of the French Empire, to the beginning of the British Empire, and the American Empire has carried it on. In the last thirty years, modern Hollywood has also told the story in the most spectacular way. If you look at the depictions, whether it is in TV programs or Hollywood films, the depiction of Arabs,

they're mostly presented either as money-grubbing oil sheiks or as barbarous terrorists; there seem to be no other images of Arab peoples. Now it is not as though there aren't money-grubbing oil sheiks or barbarous terrorists in the Arab world, but that is a small, small fraction of what the Arab world is about. In these depictions, what we've lost is any sense of the complexity, the contradiction, of the humanity of a people. Anything that may make Arab people human has been lost within these very, very narrow images.

This doesn't happen with everyone. It doesn't happen, for example, with white people. When Timothy McVeigh bombed the Federal building in Oklahoma, people did not indict all white people. They could have said, Well, he's white and therefore. The reason they didn't do that is because the category of White is a much more complex category. We know that it can't be limited to one very narrow image or one very narrow story, but that doesn't happen with minority populations. With the stories told about the Arab world, in particular, it's a very narrow set of stories that comes to define a whole population; it deprives them, in fact, of any kind of humanity. That is, on the one hand, these stories of Orientalism; at the same time, you have really a profound ignorance in the American population about the rest of the world, and especially about the Middle East.

Americans don't know much about the Middle East. The public relations arm of various Right-wing governances makes sure that Americans remain unaware of the thirty-five year, illegal occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. This occupation is condemned by everyone else in the rest of the world; it's condemned continually by the United Nations, yet most Americans don't even know that it's taking place. That is not the fault of Americans; it's not because Americans are dumb, [rather] it is because the media system and the education system that should provide this kind of information, simply has not done it.

If the media told other kinds of stories, then you'd have a different view of the Arab world. For example, five days after the September 11th tragedy, there actually was the anniversary of another event that people in the Middle East know very well; for people in the Middle East, September 16th is a significant date. This was the nineteenth anniversary of the massacres that took place at the Palestinian refugee camps at Sabra and Shatila in Lebanon, when Ariel Sharon, who is now the Prime Minister of Israel, oversaw a brutal massacre of nearly two thousand Palestinian women and [children]. That anniversary is well known in the Middle East, yet Americans are very unaware of it. If they were aware of it, they would have a different kind of view of what the category of Arab means. You put these two things together the long history of Orientalism and the sort of evacuation of history of the Middle East [and] it's not surprising that the reaction to September 11th is hatred and anger, both at the external other, as well as the internal other; that's not surprising.

Danger and Opportunity

Partly because of this history of present and absent images, this is a moment of profound danger for the world out there, as well as the world internal to the U.S. A lot of people are talking about that moment of danger, but this is also a moment of profound opportunity, and I think it is really important, politically, to talk about that. Because this is really a new situation that we've never faced before, and because it is a new situation, we really have new ways of thinking about the world. Progressives or Left-wing people have a sort of knee-jerk reaction to these things; it is to denounce the government, organize demonstrations, and say, This is another imperialist war. I think we are in a new situation right now; I don't think that reaction will get us

anywhere right now. What we now have to do is much more difficult and I am talking about Progressives what we have to do now is talk not to ourselves, which we often do, but to our neighbors across the backyard fence.

We have to reach beyond the choir, that is people who already agree with us. We have to reach beyond that, to people who don't agree with us, and we have to have honest conversations with those people. I think we have an opportunity to do that right now. An opportunity that has not existed before because Americans are scared. This is not the Gulf War, for example. Americans were not scared in the Gulf War; Saddam Hussein didn't scare anyone. This is not Kosovo; this is not Milosevic. This isn't over there and the effects are not felt over there. This is I think for the first time in over fifty years this is real war on American soil. This is what war looks like. This is not a video game. War is not a movie. This is what real war looks like with all of its pain, all of its suffering, all of its injustice, and all of its horror. I think people are feeling that in a really visceral way. This is not just a media image. People are deeply affected by and connect to the horror that they've seen in New York as well as in Washington. I think that is one of the reasons there isn't a rush to war among the whole population that we might have expected.

I have been surprised, when [I have looked] at some of the opinion polls, that the rush to war and the rush to military action is not as great as we might have thought it to be. Despite the media system that's launched a propaganda campaign a propaganda assault on the American population trying to convince them of that war that is really pretty terrifying it is not working in the way it normally does because Americans are pretty scared; I tell you, I'm scared. For progressives and for the Left, this is not the Vietnam War. We can't place this easily in the context of imperialism. That is, I have no empathy with the butchers who carried out this horrible atrocity; I want them apprehended and I want them punished as well.

September 11th may be the first truly global event of the 21st century. Perhaps September 11th was the first truly global event in human history because what terrorism does is it makes everyone a potential victim. That's what indiscriminate violence does; everyone is a potential victim. I think some of the reaction from the rest of the world recognizes this; when we hear about reactions from around the world, there is great grief and pain at the loss the Americans have suffered. But there is also a sense that, well perhaps now Americans will see what it's like to live under constant threat and terror. They will see what it is like to feel afraid all of the time, because that is what a large part of the world lives in. I think to the extent that, for the first time perhaps, Americans see themselves as part of the world, that can only be a good thing. To the extent that Americans see themselves as having interests with populations around the world, I think that can be only a good thing.

There was a radio commentary I heard the other day on NPR where the commentator was saying normally when she gets the paper she starts with the front page and then she sort of goes straight to the calendar section. Now as she passes through she [lingers] on the foreign news because now that foreign news is relevant to her. It has always been relevant; Americans just haven't known it. But now at least they realize that they are integrated into the world. That is why I think this a moment of profound opportunity. It is a moment when we can educate. It's a moment when we can really appeal to the best of America. We can appeal to that sense of compassion, and caring, and sharing, and empathy that we've seen so much. I don't think there is anything preordained that says Americans can only act out of anger and frustration. I think the last three weeks have shown us that; Americans can act in many, many other ways. I think the challenge for liberals and progressives is to do the hard work of education and connection and

talking to people who we normally don't talk to, to try and shift them to a new way of thinking about the world. I think September 11th has at least given us the possibility to have that kind of discussion.

Asking Why?

I think the media coverage has been a mixture of good and bad. The good part is, especially in the first couple of days, the media did a very, very good job of conveying the pain, and sorrow, and the experience that people were going through in New York and . . . actually less so in Washington; most of the focus was [on] New York. I think the media did a very good job of showing the horror of this and the human costs and human tragedy of this. They (the media) were very important in terms of bringing people together at this time of tragedy. That being said, most of the media coverage I think has, actually, been mostly bad. After that initial positive way of thinking about it, after that first couple of days, what we've had is an endless parade of government or ex-government officials with very little critical questioning by the journalists of them. Essentially government officials and people who were in government were able to get on and give their views without very little challenge. I think the old Soviet Union would have been really proud in terms of how closed the media system has been to non-official views. I mean this is the way a propaganda system works when it's working well. I don't think the American public has been given access to the range of views that you really need at this time of crisis, and that any democracy needs.

Beyond that, there is also the issue of what question [the media has] been trying to answer; whatever coverage we have is always trying to answer some question. The questions that the media has really tried to answer are: Who did it? How did they do it? Who were the accomplices? Etc. Of course, Osama bin Laden's name has come up again, and again, and again. It is almost as though it is someone we can pour all of our anger and all of our anxieties onto. It is like Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War, or Milosevic during the crisis in Kosovo. In fact, if bin Laden didn't exist, we'd have to invent him; we need someone on whom we can put all these anxieties. But even when it comes to bin Laden, there's a pretty selective investigation. For example, you can't go back to the question of who created bin Laden in the first place. The answer to that, of course, is bin Laden is a creation of the United States, especially George Bush Sr. [who], when he was chief of the CIA, was funding bin Laden. Of course, at the time, bin Laden was called a freedom fighter because he was fighting the Soviet Union. What's changed in the meantime is not bin Laden he was a fanatic, women-hating, fundamentalist who distorted Islam then, as well as now. Nothing has changed in bin Laden, but what has changed is the media's and government's assessment of him. Now he is not a freedom fighter; he is the biggest terrorist in the history of the world. If we find out that it is his network behind this, in one sense he has come back to haunt his creator. A good way to think about bin Laden is that he's Frankenstein's monster come back to destroy his creator. That is the kind of question, even if you're focusing on bin Laden, that is the kind of questioning, I think we should be focusing on. So even on the question of Who [did this]? the media, I don't think, has done a very good job.

Beyond the question of Who? the question we have to answer is the question of Why? What is it that drove these terrorists? Why did they do this? Again I think the media has given us a really superficial answer here. They haven't done a good job at all. The answer that's been given, for example, by Dan Rather when he appeared on *The Letterman Show*, but by lots of other experts as well, is that they, the terrorists, hate our freedom and democracy. That's just a

ridiculous answer and it's ridiculous because it doesn't tell us anything. It doesn't help us understand the situation the way we need to understand it, and what we now have to do is ask this question this question of Why? fearlessly. We have to ask this question; we have to try to answer it and not be afraid of where the answer takes us. The question is: Why is there so much hatred and enmity towards the U.S. government around the world? Not just with fanatics. I want to stress the anger that people feel is not about Americans; the anger that many people around the world feel is with the American Government and the policies that it has pursued.

If you really want to understand why violence occurs, we have to take the question of violence seriously. If we are interested in dealing with it, we have to look at the environment, the context from which violence emerges, because violence always emerges out of something; it always emerges out of some context. James Gilligan, [a] writer on violence, says that there is no such thing as a senseless act; there is always some sense to what people are doing; there is always something that drives them. We have to figure that out if we want to try and prevent it. Calling people crazy may make you feel good, but it doesn't help us understand what feeds that craziness. It is the same thing with school shootings. If [we] really want to understand what is going on with school shootings, we have to ask the question: What is going on in the world of young, white men that is causing a number of them to act out in this way? Just calling them crazy is not going to give us the answers. We need to really deal with this in a serious way. Sometimes people don't want to ask that question because if you ask that question seriously than you are somehow justifying the horrific acts that people commit as a result of it. I think we have to be able to separate those two things. We have to separate the way people react from the real issues that are there.

For example, I could be having a disagreement with you and that is a real disagreement based on real issues but if I then decide to punch you or commit some other act of violence on you, that doesn't make the issues of the disagreement any less real; the response is totally illegitimate, of course, but the basic issues that led to the conflict still remain. If you really want to deal with the question of violence, we have to ask that question: Why is this happening? Why is there this resentment that seems to be against the policies of the U.S. Government? If we did that, if we asked that question, then we would have to know something about the policies of the U.S. Government in the Middle East; we'd have to know something about the history of U.S. involvement in the Middle East. And that is a good place for progressives to be; it's a good place for anyone to be because that's more knowledge. The reason it's a good place for progressives to be is because I am convinced that most Americans, if they knew, would be horrified at some of the policies [their] government is enacting in their name. For example, if Americans really knew about the sanctions on Iraq and that the sanctions on Iraq since the end of the Gulf War have killed half a million children under five most Americans, being decent, compassionate, caring people, would demand that that policy change.

So asking the question of Why? can, I think, only be good. I think it may even lead to more democracy, as citizens hold elected officials responsible for the policies they put in place. More knowledge is always good; more knowledge is always good, and more democracy is always good. The media, because they are so closely tied to government, won't ask those questions unless they are pushed. It is really up to us to push those questions. We have to push the media to ask those questions, but we also have to ask those questions in other places where we interact with people, where we talk to people.

Fear and Civil Liberties

There's no doubt people are scared, and when people are scared and fearful, they might be willing to give up, sacrifice, a lot of things they otherwise might not. Like civil liberties. And in terms of individual freedom, this is, this really is one of the freest countries in the world; people generally can express whatever opinion they want. And actually, most Americans are very weary about giving more power to government, particularly when it comes to issues around civil liberties; I think that's a very, very healthy reaction to have. But, in non-normal times, when people are scared, then in fact they may be willing to agree to all kinds of things that they otherwise wouldn't.

For example, let's look at the situation before all this. Look at how the prison population in the United States has grown. We now have over two million people in prison mostly men in prison, half of those are African-Americans. Our prison population has grown enormously in the last twenty years. There has been pretty strong public support for this; there has been public support for tough laws. You know, three strikes and you are out. There has been support for the death penalty. There has been support for building new prisons. I mean, you can't build new schools, but if someone wants to build a new prison, there seems to be unlimited funds for that, unlimited *public* funds for that. The interesting thing is, people are generally scared and are willing to support all kinds of repressive measures. Now the interesting thing is that, as we look at this, is that, as the concern about crime and violence has gone up in the last fifteen years or so, real violence, real crime has been going down. That is, there is very little correlation between the reality of violence and the reality of crime, which has been going down, and the perception of how serious it is, which is going up.

So people are scared, when the situation should be opposite. So why are people so scared? It's not a difficult question to answer. The reason they're scared is because they live in a culture in which the media is constantly telling them stories about how dangerous the world is and presenting the world in much more dangerous ways than it actually is. And so, a lot of studies that have been done have found that the more you are exposed to media, and the media telling you stories about what a dangerous world it is, the more you're likely to support tougher laws against crime, or more likely, for example, to support the death penalty. Watching more violence doesn't make you more violent; that's one of the most interesting things about this research. It doesn't make you more violent; it makes you more scared. And a scared population is a much more controllable population. A scared population is much more willing to give up the freedoms that they fought for all through the years.

Well, since September 11th, everyone is scared, including me. The question is: How will we react on that fear; what will we use to react? Will it be, for example, the worst of us? Will we react with fear, with hatred of strangers, with giving more authority to government, with accepting infringements on our personal liberty by locking up Arab-Americans? By deporting immigrants without trial? There [is a lot] of talk about how Israel for example has dealt with suicide bombers and the threat of terror. The question is: Will we end up like Israel? I really hope not. I don't think the lesson we want to learn from Israel is the lesson: the only way to live in this time is to become more militarized, is to give more power to the state. Israel is no safer, and it is no more immune to indiscriminate attack, even though it is heavily militarized. So, I hope we don't react to this I hope our reaction to being scared is not to shy away from the world out there and demand that the government protect us. I hope that we'll respond from the best of us. Reacting not with more fear, but reacting more openly, reacting by trying to figure out how

we make this a safer world.

Yes, we have to be secure there's no doubt about that. We have to be secure in our dealings in this world, and I think we are going to have to live with a level of security, especially when it comes to travel, that we have not been used to before. But that doesn't mean we have to give up all of our freedoms. We also have to think about how we make this a safer world by dealing with the root causes, the root causes that have led to this situation that has created this terror and this anxiety. So I think one of the most important things, one of the most patriotic things, that people can do right now is, in fact, to ask difficult questions.

In this climate, in fact, it's very difficult to ask any questions which might be seen to be critical of government, or critical of the administration, as it is seen as being unpatriotic. I think it is exactly the opposite. Patriotism is about opening up the options that Americans should have and asking the difficult questions. I think that is, in fact, one of the definitions of patriotism. You have to ask difficult questions for the good of the whole, for the good of the society in general. It's tough; it's tough to do that. And we know there are situations now where journalists have been fired; they have been put under increasing pressure when they ask those kinds of questions. I hope we react by providing support for that kind of environment, for an environment that in fact encourages questions.

Americans are right now being pulled between fear on the one hand and compassion on the other. And where we will end up you know, what will we use to get out of this? I don't think is predetermined. But it will depend upon what we as a people are willing to struggle for; it will depend upon the values and the morality that we want to use to create this new world that we live in. I hope those values will not be values of fear and loathing. Those will be values of compassion and empathy and more freedom.

ROB OKUN

Masculinity, Vulnerability and September 11th

The very night after the Tuesday attacks was the night of the Men Overcoming Violence batterer intervention group that I've been running for the last five years. And not to talk about what had happened the day before would have been like having an elephant in the middle of the room and just going on with our regular [agenda]. So I really started the group by inviting the men, many of whom had been in the group for twenty, thirty, thirty-five weeks, to talk about how [they were] feeling right [then], or how did [they] feel yesterday: Don't give me the glut of information from media and the images that you've already seen; what are you feeling? And it was really telling what happened next. To a man, [they were] angry: I want to retaliate; I'm angry, I want to retaliate; I'm angry, I want to retaliate. I said, Okay, I get that; I think for a lot of people, that's the first reaction, now what? What else are you feeling? Cause I know that you're feeling more than that.

And it took awhile to draw them out, but what came next was, I don't feel safe. I'm feeling a little unsure about things. I don't know if it's okay to travel. And they couldn't quite articulate the word vulnerability, but that was what was, you know, kind of hovering in the room until it finally got named by my co-leader in the group. And then they were able to start to make some connections or we helped them to make some connections between what happens in your own personal life and what happens when you're faced with something of this level of catastrophe. [The] same issues of violence, and the same issues of fear that your partner [feels] when you lash out in anger is what you're experiencing now; and what's behind that same anger is the fear, is the vulnerability, is the unsafety. So that right away there was a connection that we could make with men about how you respond, you know, when you're angry, and obviously this is a topic with such a range of dimensions and perspectives to take into account.

I think coming from the perspective of working with men and men having a real opportunity right now to step up and to interrupt this kind of drumbeat towards war and towards business as usual with might equals right that we can really say, Let's go in and look at the vulnerability; let's look at those places of unsafety, and let's see how you would want to respond. Because the feeling that you're having now is how your partner feels when you lash out, when you feel angry. And it did no good nationally or internationally when George Bush said, you know, Down in Texas we have posters that say, Wanted: Dead or Alive. That's the kind of old model of masculinity. An opportunity like this comes along that we can interrupt, and we can make some change. So here we are at this precipice, here we are at this very teachable moment where men in particular can say, You know what? The whole way that were approaching what's going on is [going to] lead us down that same old road. And we've been doing this as a civilization for, you know, from the beginning using violence to end violence. And part of the work in these batterers treatment groups is to teach men about the cycle of violence and how it can just perpetuate itself until there [are] some tools, until there [are] some strategies to interrupt [it]. And right now, my own personal mantra is: Every day that goes by that nothing has happened is a good day because it's allowing more voices of reason, it's allowing more voices of concern, it's allowing more voices of, Let's try something else. As a global community, we have a tremendous opportunity to take something that was horrific and to turn it around into something really positive.

What Do Fathers Say to Their Sons?

Well, I think, in particular, what men can do is. . . fathers can talk to their sons, fathers can say, particularly to sons who are of draft age . . . and this rush to go down to sign up, I mean it felt very reminiscent of having come of age during Vietnam; there was this real split in the road between those of us who saw what was going on [as] folly, [as] dangerous, and [as] harming a whole civilization in Southeast Asia and those who said, you know, I'm ready. I'm gung ho; let me at em. And I think it's that whatever's going on culturally and socially that allowed the beginnings of an early men's movement, early consciousness, that there was some other approach to being a man other than to go towards warmaking and soldiering that that shift, while it's been slow in the last thirty years, has been steady. [There may be] mini-critical masses in various pockets of the country that can move the consciousness along, that can help the transformation, so that young men who might be inclined to go down and sign up might give pause to say, Well, it's just as valuable to become a conflict-transformation person [as] it is to become a soldier. And it's just as valuable to use the kind of skills that would be necessary to go into dangerous situations.

This is not about shying away from risk-taking; because I think that what's being asked of all of us is actually to take more risks than we might have [previously] in our personal lives. [This is a time] for men, and for those who are in positions to mentor boys and young men, to say, This old model that got us, you know, to where we are with the number of wars and the number of acts of terrorism, this is what we have a chance to interrupt, specifically as men. It's not that we're not going to be taking advantage of and needing the leadership of women and the allied voices of women, but this is a particular moment for men to say, You know what? We've got to try something different. And I think [it is important for] the schools [to do] teach-ins, not just at the college level but [also to do] teach-ins at the elementary school level, [to talk] about war. There are programs all over the country now that are teaching conflict-resolution in the elementary schools. They get fourth graders, they train them, and by the time they're in fifth and sixth grade, they're managing many of the conflicts that go on in the schools. And that's the message that this is a kind of a community service that ultimately will be more valuable than going off to parts unknown to kill innocent people.

What Would You, As a Counselor, Say to George Bush?

If I had a group, a batterers' intervention group, that had a George Bush and a Colin Powell and a Donald Rumsfeld in it, then the kind of questions that would be relevant to ask them is: what after that shock? What after that anger? What else are you feeling? What else is going on for you? Any moment that I [saw] from any of [them] that [their] humanity, that [their] grief, that [their] vulnerability [showed] through, that [would be] an opportunity not to gird [themselves] away and say, Oh, my weakness is showing, I have to kind of toughen up here and I have to, you know, play the macho leader of the country. [I would encourage them] to stop and [ask], You know what? If I'm feeling this way, what are my counterparts feeling in other parts of the world? What are the leaders of the Taliban feeling? They're posturing, they're making noise, they're strutting around, but what else is going on? Are they scared? Because I'm scared; because I don't know what's going to happen. I've got a grandchild down in Florida who's a person of color. My son the governor of Florida has a wife who's from Mexico, and he has a child who is person of color; what's going to happen? What if he's in a situation? Can I actually

get myself to stop, you know, this track that I've been trained to be on, you know, all the way through being the son of George Bush Sr. and going all the way through. Can I stop and ask myself, What else is there?

And there have been mini-glimmers, and I say mini-glimmers because that's all they've been of that [aspect of] humanity wanting to assert itself. And I know that there are the Carl Rowses and that the machinery of re-electing George Bush in 2004 [is] already at work and that they're using this whole situation to launch a campaign to get him re-elected because we all know he was a one-term president from the way that he illegally seized the White House. But right now, . . . it's incumbent upon us to really find those soft spots. I think that this is, you know, that this approach to looking at our male leadership [is important] and the people that are primarily making these decisions, Condoleezza Rice notwithstanding, are primarily male to really look for those places of vulnerability, not as a way to put them on the defensive, but actually to open them up to what's going on.

I wish that they were reading the kind of E-mails that you and I are reading, the kinds of incredible displays of resourcefulness and imagination and compassion and love that are just coursing around the globe. I mean, this situation as horrific as it was, has actually allowed [an] outpouring of social transformation that we've been yearning for to really take some giant steps and I don't know if there are people in the White House who are seeing the E-mails that I am seeing. Now I don't know if they're, you know, reading Robin Morgan's E-mails from New York City, or that scathing but accurate indictment that Susan Sontag delivered in the first week, but there's too much good going on for us to lose what's really possible here and for men like Bush, and Cheney, and Rumsfeld, and Powell to be sitting in a group of, you know, a batterers' intervention group, a group for men who are doing violence in their intimate relations. . . and I think that it's not making too big a leap to say that government leaders are our intimates in terms of representing us and for them to be doing this kind of violent posturing because their words are much more powerful than what happens between two people in the privacy of their home in terms of the global impact for [us] to equate what they're doing and how they're posturing as a form of terrorism as a form of making us, as citizens, feel that sense of fear, that sense of unsafety. [This] is an opportunity for whatever pressure we can bring to bear to open up that vulnerability, to open up that place within their hearts because, for whatever else, they have beating hearts, and they are reachable, [and] this is an opportunity for men, in particular, to step up and to push in that direction.

The other concern that I have, that I think is really important, is that while we have lots of teachable moments ahead, that one that we have to really work hard to sustain is the evolving democracy that's here. And I say evolving because I don't think we're fully getting to come from the expression as it's written in the Constitution and as it was proclaimed in all of its glory by the founders of the United States. And that's that I want to feel that any voices of dissent, any voices of criticism, any voices that are calling for alternatives to wrapping ourselves in the flag and only seeing military retribution as the answer . . . I want those voices to have full and equal access to the airwaves and to the streets. Because if our civil liberties get curtailed during this period, then I think all of the progress that I was talking about in terms of social transformation and healing and connection is going to be severely compromised if people aren't being made to feel that they can fully express themselves. And that's a concern that I have that has to parallel everything else that's going on.

LORRAINE ALI

An Arab-American in Cairo

I was in Cairo when all this happened – I had actually gone there a couple of days earlier for vacation, and I was supposed to be there for two weeks. And it was just really strange because when I got news of the attacks, I was actually in this really busy shopping area, which is sort of [the] intersection for all of Cairo – it’s called the Khan el-Khalili Shopping Area. [There are] all these little stalls – just as you imagine it would be like [about] four hundred years ago there. And I started hearing from word of mouth, [and] people’s cell phones started ringing, and they [were] saying, “Oh did you hear that the White House got blown up? Did you hear that the Pentagon got bombed?” and I [was] thinking, “This is crazy; this is some sort of tabloid story, you know, from some obscure paper in Jordan or something.” Anyway, I think it really sort of hit when I was walking by a shop, and there [were] a lot of people outside, sort of crowded around this old black and white TV looking at the Twin Towers on fire. And then I realized, “Oh my god; this is real.” And the weird thing about it is that I know as Americans we think that that’s a symbol around the world, but most people didn’t know what [the World Trade Center was]. And one of the kids asked, “Is that Palestine?” because you couldn’t fathom that it could be anywhere outside of the Middle East that such a horrific act was taking place.

The initial reaction was [that] people were totally shocked, and it was really actually similar to the reactions that I heard were happening here: people were shocked, [and] once it sort of sunk in that there were people in that building and that [a lot] of people probably died, people were sickened by it. And when they found out I was American they [said], “My condolences. I’m so sorry, that’s so horrible.” But then I have to say, you know, a consistent question that I got asked by almost every Arab, every Egyptian I ran into was: “Do the American people really not understand why this happened?” I mean it was an actual, honest question they were [asking]: “The Americans keep asking ‘why?’ Do they really not know why? Do they really not understand that, you know, there [are] a lot of people that are very angry with America?” And they couldn’t believe that Americans would not know that. And the other thing that was really sort of a consistent sentiment with everyone was: “There’s no way Arabs could have done this; there’s no way Muslims could have done this. They just couldn’t. It’s an awful act, and there’s no way that an Arab or a Muslim would do this.” I mean it could just not sink in, that it could possibly be one of their own that did it.

The other thing was. . . here I was, hearing from people on the street, from cab drivers, from people in shops from people that I went out for coffee with how sickened they were by what happened, how sad it was that all these people died, how horrible it was, and then I go back to my hotel room and turn on CNN and they’ve got, you know, their coverage of the Arab world, which is the fifteen Palestinian kids in the street celebrating. [My response to that was]: “Wait a minute. I am sitting here in the Arab world; I am in Cairo [which is] getting news from Jordan, [which is] getting news, you know, from Libya, [which is] getting news from all over the Arab world, and I’m not seeing this. I’m not seeing this on their news; I’m not seeing them celebrating, saying, ‘Yahoo! The Americans finally got what they deserved.’” It was CNN; it was the American news station that was bringing this breaking news of, “Hey, the Arab world is celebrating. Hey, the Palestinians are celebrating.” And I thought, you know, to be inflammatory at this time, to be pushing that violent Arab image at this time, don’t you think that it’s time to stop this? Don’t you think you’ve done enough damage? And *this* is part of the

reason there's so much resentment in the Arab world toward America: the way they've been represented. It was the most disheartening thing I think I saw, aside from the burning buildings and the Pentagon and all the people dying, and after that thinking, "Oh my god; this isn't going to change. It's going to get worse."

The Media & the Middle East

I can't tell from the coverage if . . . here the media [are] trying to explain what an Arab is to the American people, what a Muslim is, and they're not necessarily the same, and it's like *Arab/Muslim 101*. And I can't tell if the media [are] trying to figure it out themselves as they're trying to educate the American people because it's just hysterical. It's like, "Were we that clueless to begin with?" I mean, it's amazing some of the things I hear, you know, and some of the absurdities like, "Well in the Muslim religion, it's said that after you die, you get twelve virgins, so dying is a good thing. No matter what you do before you die, once you do it, if it's in the name of Allah, you will be wiped clean of all your sins, and you will have the twelve virgins." [My response is]: "What? Where did that come from? I have never heard that before!" And some people say, "Oh no, no, no. That's what they were saying that Osama bin Laden was telling his men." And then in other reports [they're saying], "This is what Islam means: . . ."

I mean, it's just this confusion [about] what the terrorists believe – well is that what all of Islam believes? Do they all believe that if you run a plane into a building, you will go straight to heaven? I mean, it's just amazing. Nobody was asking those questions when crazy, fundamentalist Christians were blowing up abortion clinics or when Timothy McVeigh did the Oklahoma City Building. [Timothy McVeigh was] Christian. Nobody ask[ed] those questions. In certain ways, I've been pretty amazed – in a positive way – about how the media [has] covered it. Just because they've had to find out more about the Arab world, they've had to find out more about the Muslim world, and, therefore, [the coverage is] just smarter than it was before September 11th. It's a forced education. Now, some of the things I've heard have been completely wrong, which is scary because if the American people are getting their information from CNN and CNN's got it wrong, then it's like, "Oh great."

I think the inflammatory way that they cover the Arab world scares me. I mean with the Palestinians, you know, cheering in the streets, showing flag burning in Pakistan – *American* flag burning in Pakistan, showing some Arab-Americans here saying, "Well, you know, the U.S. is getting what they deserved." Yes, there [are] going to be those people out there that say that, but there [are] also, you know, one billion Muslims out there, and you're filming thirty of them and saying, "This is what the Arab world thinks," and that's totally irresponsible. And I think the American media has a lot to answer for in covering things that way. I think it causes a lot of fear, and that's not what we need right now; there's enough fear out there already.

And I am just really concerned about that . . . we're not telling people why the Arab world is [angry with] the United States; we're not explaining beyond some childish statement of, "Oh, they're just jealous." You know, we're not explaining why U.S. foreign policy has caused a lot of resentment toward the U.S.. Instead, it's still fluff stories, in a lot of ways, which I was really disappointed. I thought: here the news has a chance, here the TV news, print media, have a chance to actually get back to hard news, something we lost in the last five or six years. In certain ways, it has happened but largely it's still a lot of fluff stories, which really is kind of sad.

What should American policy be guided by?

I think we need to have more balanced policies in Israel. I think there needs to be more of an eye towards actually getting the Palestinians their own state. I think we say, “Yes we want peace there,” and then we just leave it at that. But there has to be more of an active role in terms of asking our allies – which is Israel – to come to the table and also letting the U.N. come in and deal with the Palestinian side, because I don’t believe America can. I mean, we are allied with Israel; we can’t therefore be asking the Palestinians to come to the table. I mean, they also need their own representatives, and I think [everyone] needs to come together. I think there needs to be a more balanced coverage of the situation in the American media. I think that has a lot to do with how Americans feel about the situation over there. Right off the bat, I think just explaining, “Okay these people were displaced. They do not have their own state. This is why they are angry.” Boom. You know, just give [our people that information] so they understand that’s it’s not just insane people rioting in the streets.

Number two, I think we need to stop sanctions in Iraq. I think they’re only hurting the people – people are starving, people don’t have medication. We need to deal with the Iraqi government separately. I mean, it only looks in the Arab world like we are there to punish the people, which is actually what sanctions are doing. So I think we need to stop that. And I think we just need to have a more open dialogue with Arab and Muslim countries instead of simply stating demands, drawing lines in the sand, sanctioning, dropping bombs, giving aid to their enemies. I mean, we need to just start having a more open dialogue. And I think we actually need to have some Arab-Americans or Muslim-Americans in the government who can help with a deeper understanding of that part of the world. Because America just does not have an understanding of that part of the world, and the cultural differences, I feel, drive us apart. There needs to be some sort of bridge where we understand the Middle East, Islam, Arab culture better than we do. I think that has been a huge problem.

Has life changed for you as an Arab-American?

As an Arab American, I think life has totally changed for me. I feel now when somebody asks me, “How do you feel about what happened? How do you feel about the attacks?” I don’t feel like they’re asking me for my own well being, like, “How do you feel?” I think it’s sort of testing for a conscience – “Well your Arab, you’re a Muslim, I think, because your name is Ali. So are you even feeling this? You know, do you agree with it?” – I feel that is the underlying question, but they’re not saying that.

And I’ve also felt in certain situations [that] I should keep my mouth shut. I felt a little scared in certain situations. Before September 11th, there would be heated arguments or there would be discussions, but I wouldn’t pull back. And now in certain ways, I feel like I have to pull back just because we’re in such a sore spot right now. And I feel like any sort of mention, even saying, “Oh yes, my father was from Baghdad,” somehow that’s going to hurt. Somehow, that’s going to hurt the person I’m talking to and they’re going to strike back at me. I can’t even begin to explain what it feels like internally because, like everybody, [I] feel so sad and so totally helpless about all this. But then also [I] feel this other thing, this other thing of all of a sudden having to explain that [I’m] not guilty because [I] didn’t do anything.

All of a sudden, you’re guilty by association and it’s a fear almost, and then it’s this sadness and then it’s this guilt, and then it’s this anger also: “Why do I have to explain myself?”

Why does the Pakistani cab driver have to hang a flag in his cab? Why do all the Arab shops on Atlantic Street in Brooklyn have to hang bigger flags out there to prove that they don't believe in this, to prove that they are innocent?" You know to me that is so humiliating, and it's so infuriating that that even has to happen right now. It's like saying, when one white guy commits a crime in America, going up to other white guys and asking, "Why did he do that?" They're not even related to that man you know. That is probably the biggest change of having to explain that you're innocent even though you've done nothing wrong. I think that's the hardest part right now.

NANCY CARLSSON-PAIGE

How do we talk to children about Sept. 11?

What are the important things for children to know? One of the real challenges with this situation is the amount of patriotism that's being felt and expressed across the country, and children are reflecting that. So as an educator, what I want to try to do is make more complicated even [not just] that patriotic thinking, but [also] in general the thinking about the entire situation. So rather than looking at it at face value, trying to help children think more critically about what's happening and the various issues relating to it. The younger kids are, the harder that is because they're more egocentric in their thinking, and they don't think critically in the sense that it's harder for them to have multiple viewpoints about anything. And as kids get older, it's easier and easier. But even with young children, you can certainly help them start thinking about other ways things might be or might have been. So the guide for me is the notion of critical thinking and how we can start to enact that with children at different developmental levels.

So even if I were teaching first grade, I would talk about what happened in the news and I would ask kids, "What is it that people did?" And I would hear what they understood, and assuming that we're talking about the terrorist attacks, I would ask them what other ways they could have shown how they felt. Because kids would often say, "They were angry; they knocked down the tower because they were angry." So you might ask why they were angry: "Do you know what made them mad? What other ways could they have shown how they felt other than that? What do we do?" Because with younger kids relating to their own lives is really the place to start: "What do we do when we're angry? What other ways do we show how we feel without hitting each other?" The basic idea being we're trying to help kids participate in a classroom where nonviolence and active peacemaking are part of the classroom culture.

But as we get older, really starting fourth and fifth grade, children are capable of looking under the surface and going beyond that superficial understanding of all of the related issues. So let's say patriotism. Kids are capable of thinking beyond this "America's the best" idea. And I think the best way to help them move there is by asking them questions that help them think about that. For example, "Can patriotism ever have a negative side? Is patriotism ever dangerous? Do people in other countries feel patriotic?" – the kinds of questions that would help kids to start to think about an issue they may be looking at quite superficially and getting a lot of help from mass media and the culture in more complex ways.

And then as kids are older, and get older, we can also be giving them information – information that reflects multiple perspectives on what happened. And we can start that also by the middle of elementary school and all the way through middle school and high school. And that would be bringing in information about what led to it, you know, all sorts of current, international news that they may not have had that starts to help children understand, "What were the circumstances in the Persian Gulf and around the globe that led to this? Why did it happen?" That kind of causal, logical thinking is hard for littler kids, but as kids get into late elementary school and middle school they can start to think about, "Well, why did people do this? What led them here?"

Unfortunately, the whole way that the media present everything from a U.S. perspective and the way other groups have always been stereotyped and the sort of superficial presentation, the dichotomous good guy/bad guy thinking that gets presented, it all feeds into keeping all

Americans from being critical thinkers, but certainly children. While children are actually capable from a fairly young age of beginning to be critical thinkers, media completely undermine that ability in them because there never is a multiple perspective presented or about anything in the world arena; it's always from the United States' point of view. So if children don't have an opportunity to get another point of view from home or from school, it's not likely that they're going to get it. They'll continue to maintain a perspective that the media want them to have, and that definitely is presenting to them a very monolithic, nationalistic perspective. It doesn't make the connections around how things occurred, what led to them. It doesn't take the point of view of the other groups and how they might have legitimately come to what they're doing. It easily stereotypes other groups by not giving you a filled-out understanding of the complexities of Middle Eastern culture groups, and it also presents a very pro-American, good guy/bad guy point of view. Children are, developmentally speaking, susceptible to that worldview. So it fits in with their ways of thinking easily. They have to be encouraged and actually stimulated to think outside it. They are capable of it but not so easily on their own.

Kids and Patriotism

I was working with a group of children after, who were about ten, eleven, twelve, and thirteen years old. After, around the terrorist attacks. And that's when I realized how the patriotism was important to them, and that threw me because I came into the situation not actually assuming that, but as soon as I saw it, I realized that they needed it. So what I did was after I listened to them for awhile about their sort of patriotic ideas, I started asking them questions [such as]: "Could patriotism ever go too far?" And they were great. They immediately said, "Yes it could. We could be patriotic in this country but we have to respect other countries' right to be patriotic, too." And then I [asked], "Could it become dangerous?" "Well, yes. If you were too patriotic, it could lead to war," they said. At the same time, they were talking about being afraid of war happening because of September 11th. So it's very complex for us as educators because we want to try to reassure them. We also want to try to extend their thinking. But I think we do that most by asking them questions that are provocative enough to get them to think about things in more complex ways. Once they're capable, which is like these ages on.

The other thing that I realized when I was with them was how important it was for that age group – ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen – to take action steps. I forgot to mention that, but they were very attached to that idea, and developmentally, I understand why. Because action steps are very concrete, and you feel like you get a sense of mastery over the situation through them. Whereas younger kids, through their play – really, through their sense of dramatic play – they get a sense of mastery; they resolve an emotional problem through their play. Kids in this age group [10-13] actually need to do something concrete, and doing something concrete means anything. I mean, the most important thing is that they figure out something to do in the context of where they live or where their school is or whatever. So some of the things these kids were doing – one girl in Tribeca was baking cookies for the firefighters and police officers, and giving them out on the street; one of the girls was living in a whole different area but made a bunch of cards of appreciation for firefighters in her community, and they went there and they went up to the firefighters and thanked them for all they do for the community. There's a whole range of things like that. Each of the kids sort of inventing what they could do with the help of adults, I'm sure. But those steps help them feel like they were doing something, and it made a really big

difference for them.

And I think for that age group, that's an important thing for teachers and parents to try and help with. And ideally, we would think of some action steps or help them think of some that are going to expand their thinking in a variety of ways. Maybe breaking down stereotypes or maybe sponsoring a session in the school where kids from Arab descent talk about their culture background. You know, finding action steps that are really going to be real and help them understand in more complex ways what's happening. Rather than just a superficial sort of making a cookie.

The flag is just a symbol that's being used to capture a patriotic sentiment. For me personally, it's offensive. However, in observing children, I've noticed that they seem to hold onto it. For several reasons: one, children need concrete things to hold onto to feel safe and secure, and a lot of kids are feeling very insecure right now, and disempowered. Also, there's a different tenor around the patriotism. The patriotism that got expressed during the Gulf War was very aggressive. This patriotism has a form of "We have to stick together and protect ourselves and take care of ourselves; we're on the same team." Little kids think, "We're Americans, and we have to stick together." And the flag is a symbol to kind of express that. For me, it's really important to try to get kids to look under the surface of all that and to ask other questions about patriotism, like the ones I said before. But at the same time not take that away from them because there's a certain need right now for them. And, as we said, probably for adults, too. But, you know, it's much more worrisome for me to see adults do it because they're not looking under the surface. There's nothing in the media to help them do that, and they're not thinking critically about their own patriotism. But it's understandable why children are expressing it this way and even why they need it. And so we have to be sensitive as educators to not taking that away but making it more complex.

The Media and Violence

People in entertainment media have to know that violence that's in the media is affecting violent attitudes and behavior among young people. The FTC report that was released almost exactly a year ago stated that. And the major medial organizations that got together a year ago, a little more than a year ago, got a unified statement saying, "The viewing of entertainment violence increases violent behavior in young people and desensitizes them to violence." There does continue to be a debate among, interestingly, people on the Left who insist on freedom of speech when it comes to artistry. And you'll see this written in *The Nation* often, and it drives me up the wall – that they're always arguing for entertainments, you know freedom of expression, whatever it is. The thing they fail to understand is that major corporations are profiting enormously from the promotion and sale of marketing of violence to young people. And that there are all kinds of ways that they undermine their own standards in the field, and that's what the FTC report showed.

I believe that people in Hollywood know, and people in entertainment know, that it's a problem but that they...the system they have in place is so lucrative and so established, and nobody has what it takes to come out and try to change that. So, yeah, you can see it's very sad and disappointing and quite obvious actually that any entertainment that was ready to get released that had excessive images of violence or anything related to the September 11th event, they would pull out more for a self-protective urge than it is, really, for the greater good. Sorry to say.

And it's only going to be when [there is regulation]. And this is a view that's actually not shared by everyone on the Left, unfortunately, because I don't think they actually understand the effects on children and young people of the excessive marketing to kids. They don't see how it's tied in to corporate greed and motivation, unfortunately. They just keep seeing it, very superficially, as free speech. And as long as they do that, they just play right into the hands of the corporate interests in maintaining the status quo when it comes to this marketing, and nothing will change. But I don't believe that anything will change permanently. And this is just a temporary thing, I think – the removing of these images from certain films. Nothing will change in this area until there's a regulation. Unfortunately, that's a reality. There won't be the kind of self-monitoring that would need to happen.

What was the reaction in Cuba?

It was thrilling for me to be in Cuba; I met many people. I happened to be in Cuba on September 11th. I had an extraordinary experience there; it was painful at times. I was at a conference where I heard doctors testify to the health effects of the embargo. As an American citizen, I didn't even know. I'm embarrassed to say that the U.S. embargo against Cuba of forty-two years is in violation of international law because it includes food and medicine. It's very difficult to hear [what] the effects of that embargo are on children and families. Almost immediately after September 11th, all the Cubans I knew were just expressing enormous sadness for us and grief for the American people. And then Fidel Castro made a speech, which expressed grief and offered medical aid, which I thought was one of the most beautiful examples of de-escalation I'd ever seen. Because in the conflict resolution work that we do, we talk about the notion of de-escalation: What does it mean when a conflict is escalating for someone to take a step that is outside of escalation and actually starts to get the conflict to go down? And that was a beautiful example of that, in my opinion. In international relations, I don't know what effect it had on... I mean, we don't actually know. It may have had... I bet it did have some positive effects. We probably don't know that. But it's a nice example of what de-escalation means.

The only thing that Fidel said in his speech was – and this is important – embedded in there was, “We know what terrorism is like in Cuba because we've experienced it from the United States.” And the idea that we don't hear enough in media here is that the United States has committed state-sanctioned terrorism against many other countries for a long time. That's felt like terrorism to many other countries – what we've done. And the government and media would like you to think that terrorism is something that's being committed against us and that we're innocent and that's, of course, not true.

DOUGLAS RUSHKOFF

How should we think about 9/11?

People have to be willing to deconstruct and question the narratives that they've been using to understand the world they live in. You know we have to really give up our addiction to certainties, to conclusions, to moral certitude, to sacred truth, to scientific fact even; we've got to give up our almost compulsive need to have these really solid little tidbits that we can base a structure of belief on and, instead, trust a bit more of our moment to moment sensations and impressions. The danger with doing that is when you live in such a programmed environment as America, you know most of your moment to moment thoughts and impressions are actually impulsive reactions to commercials or to a president trying to put fear in you, so it's like 'ha, ha,' you know. That impulsive or compulsive fear-based and tension-based reaction is not what I'm talking about it. What I'm talking about is the calm ability to actually participate in your interpretation of what's going on, rather than blindly accepting the interpretations of whatever parent figures or authorities you've decided to erect as your . . . lenses. You know so it's really . . . the beginning.

In one sense 9/11 is nothing new; it's just the first success, you know it's just the first time it worked. And ten years ago, they tried to blow up the World Trade Center, and if the little truck had been placed just a little bit differently down in the basement parking lot, three times more people would have been killed. If the people who were planning the Holland tunnel you know, and then they got caught. You know the fact that people were that close to being able to cause that damage and do these kinds of things is that the only difference between then and now, is we've become so isolationist, and we've lost our ability to communicate with and gather intelligence about what's going on around us, that you know something like this could be more successful. But this has been a long time coming. There are many, but right now there are two main opposing stories about what's going on on the planet. And one of them is a kind of a corporate capitalist growth model; it's this growth story where all we have to do is spread open markets or so-called open markets and free trade to every corner of the globe and wipe out all opposition and all thought and any impediment to the natural and God-granted rights of the marketplace, and we will eventually find ourselves in utopia. And the other view, which is that everything was once great when man and God were part of this very simple and loving union and all that has to be done is, you know, the infidels and the people who are trying to promote man's autonomy and man's will over the will of God, those people have to face their reckoning, we have to get our apocalypse and be saved.

And you know these two world views are truly incompatible with one another, but as media and technology and many, many forces tend to accelerate and magnify the process of communication and human relationships, this bifurcation becomes all the more radical, and there's less and less room for colors. It's like the world starts to look white and black. You're either with us or against us, as Bush would say, you know, you're either blessed or damned, as the fundamentalists would say, and there's nothing in between. You know you'll get your straight, man or woman, American or foreigner, and that's not the way the world is; there is no black and white in reality. There [are] only colors, there's only spectrum. And we are we are rapidly losing the ability to see that.

How is the media coverage different than it was during the Gulf War?

I mean when the Gulf War happened, the bleeding edge technology was really home video and public access television, so we had Deep Dish Television and Paper Tiger TV were really the places where you could get the alternative story about what was going on in the Gulf War. It really wasn't the Internet because the Internet wasn't quite a populist medium yet, you know, not that it really is globally but at least in the United States it is now. And now the Internet really is the place to look for whether it's streaming video things like this or whether it's text written by people, it really is where you can find stuff. It's not generally this alternative news reporting as much as the amalgamation of alternative things that you once wouldn't find. Alternatives—most of their stuff is pulled from other places, but then it's brought together or things that get forwarded to you like you get some [sections of an article] taken from *The Guardian* of London, and you get this one or that; it becomes this place where you can catch tidbits from the global media space in a way that you just can't on television, so it really becomes for people who want to know what's really going on, it becomes the main source of information. And the main source of opinions. I hate to call them alternative opinions because that ghettoizes them as part of alternative culture, but the so-called alternative opinions are actually majority opinions. I think that's the way most people think, and it's just not reflected in mainstream news media for all the kinds of reasons we discussed.

Media & PR for the War Effort

There's still an arms race going on between the public and its information providers. You know where the public develops some kind of defense mechanism against you know propaganda, coercion, and the media-makers and marketers come up with a new method of influence, and then we come up with a new counter-measure, and then they come up with a new counter-measure, and it gets more and more sophisticated. Until something really big happens, and then it can reset. You know in *Coercion*, I wrote about how I thought the art of public relations had died because the news cycles have gotten so fast and information-gathering had gotten so fast that you know you talk to someone like Howard Rubenstein—a great public relations maestro who does the big scandal corrections for Kathy Lee Gifford or TWA—you talk to one of them and they say, "Look the only way we can cover up things now is to actually try to fix them, is to actually get Kathy Lee working against sweatshops or get an airline working towards safety." That's the easiest way to do publicity now cause PR's such a big deal the easiest way to actually affect PR is to do something real. And that really happened because of the Internet because of information gathering because of how sophisticated the media had gotten.

When a big event, a big real event with real blood and real buildings coming down, happens, public relations strategies can move back to a much simpler level of public relations. It's the kind that you use on any population that's in danger, any population that's feeling fear that's feeling stress. Now the way advertising works, the way all the coercive measures I talked about in *Coercion* work is by intimidating the audience. You intimidate the viewer, you make them feel like a child, so they regress into a child-like state and then transfer parental authority onto whoever's talking to them, whether it's the used car salesman, the president or the advertiser. When a big, real, scary thing happens, everyone has been pre-regressed for you. You have a regressed audience, you have them in a state of fear, so now all of these tools that you've been using as a marketer or communicator to get people scared, you don't have to use anymore.

Now they're preconditioned for you, so now you just have to act like the parent, and it's done. So . . . the first two and three stages of any public relations effort no longer have to happen and you just have to be daddy, you know and it's done.

People use their monopoly over the media to exploit people's fear, and they're using it from all sides. You know, Bush uses it by stressing certainty—"By golly we will get him, we will do this. . . sooner or later justice will be done"—you know and that appeals to anyone who's confused. That's where Armageddon and apocalypse come from—there [are] all these uncertain people who see a world that's not just, and they know when push comes to shove, a messiah is going to come back and meet up justice. You know the Jews have it because in all these terrible times of exile they were told, "Don't worry. The promise land—you will one-day return. And a messiah will come and this great age will happen again." You know, Bush promises that—"Don't worry. this guy's gonna get killed, and we're gonna get justice, mark my words"—you know, that that kind of certainty.

Taking Back the Internet

I've always thought of the Internet as something very close to a life form, really as a real extension of the human nervous system. And that's always what's made it so sexy and so powerful. You know even though the Internet was really developed by the government and partly as a way for various defense contractors and institutes to communicate with each other after a nuclear war, you know very quickly the Internet became about communication and about people really exchanging social currency. It was you know scientists talking about their favorite Star Trek episodes and all their fun nerd culture rather than what they were supposed to be doing. You know it was so good at that; it was as if it became so life-like that it overshadowed all the Internet's original purposes.

So it got to the point where the military gave it up and said, "Look, forget it. There's too much conversation on this thing. This is this is just about people; this is a waste of our time." So they gave it to the National Science Foundation, National Science Foundation thinks, *Okay, we're going to do these great projects, we're going to do these super-colliders. . . we're going to talk about that.* And again, it's everybody just talking, and some students get on it, and they start talking about stuff, and it becomes this tremendous cultural place, where it's like a living, breeding exchange of thought and ideas; it became really life-like. So the National Science Foundation . . . (sigh) "Forget it we don't even want this thing." They try to give it to AT&T, who doesn't even want to buy it for you know 33 cents. They go, "What's this going to do for us? We aren't going to make money off this thing." So you know eventually it becomes a public thing you know, and people start playing with this thing, so it starts out as kind of military, governmenty, National Science thing, and then it becomes this tremendous social space.

So kids, adults, people are having all these conversations. It's really creating a new culture. And people are spending a tremendous amount of time using media—and this is you know generations of people who only experienced media as something you receive—we're now experiencing media as something you do, as a way to interact with other people, and all sorts of portholes were opening up between people who had been formally divided. Now they're all talking to each other. So corporate America looks at this and goes, "Oh you know the first studies came out. They found out [that] any family that had an Internet connection in their home was watching something like nine hours a week less television. Well that's a nightmare, that's terrible, the nine hours of television is nine hours less commercials, and they're doing this thing

that's basically free—you know, how are we going to make money on that?"

So big business thought, *We've got to get the Internet back*. . . . So they tried to make it about content, and that almost kind of worked for a little bit, but it didn't work. People didn't want that content; they wanted to talk to each other. So then they decided that it's going to be about commerce—okay, people are going to buy stuff online. People really weren't buying that much online; they were buying some but not enough—okay, now you know what we'll do? We'll make it about investing it online. 'Cause there are these kids that have gotten rich off this; we're going to sell this story now—the Internet is a way that you can make all this money by investing in it. And that story really seemed to work—the *New York Times* believed it, the *Wall Street Journal* believed it, *The Economist* believed it. So all the Internet stories which used to be in the arts and culture and society sections all ended up moving into the business section of the newspaper.

Because now the Internet was going to be this business story, and, of course, the business story was the great NASDAQ pyramid. You know this pyramid that goes from angel investors to first tier sort of Goldman Sachs investors and all the way down to NASDAQ investors, which is what the business section is the advertisement for. It's advertising the top level of a pyramid scheme to the people on the bottom, you and me, who are going to invest in this for our retirement fund. And, that I mean this was the thing that pumped new air into the NASDAQ, since the first thing that came along since biotechs—you know the biotech crash in the late 80s. Really the market had been pretty much a down-turn, you know a flat, since then. So here was a new story they were going to use. So, the idea that business was going to co-opt the Internet was really propaganda. And it was propaganda that was created by investors, by Goldman-Sachs, by the NASDAQ stock exchange, by hundreds of issues that want to get people investing in them before people figure out what's really going on. So by the time everyone in America had invested all their stuff that they had in this market—through E-trade of course—doing online investing. Talk about a snake eating its tail—you know you invest in E-trade *on* E-trade, by the time we do that, well you know, Warren Buffet's out of there, Goldman Sachs is out of there, all the big money investors are out of there, and the thing comes down, and all the little people are left holding the bag again and go broke.

As far as I'm concerned, that had nothing to do with the Internet. It may have had something to do with the web. You know it had to do with the way all that web real estate was being taken up was with these fake companies, that whatever *pets.com*, this dot-com and all those places, so that the first experience of someone going online in the late 90s was very different from someone going online in the early 90s. Someone going online in the early 90s was going onto an Internet where you used your keyboard to talk to other people. Someone going online in 1999 was using their mouse to click through a bunch of websites. So the only time you would put your hands on the keyboard maybe was to enter in your credit card number and then go back to the buy button. But now that all those companies are gone, a tremendous amount of infrastructure has been put in place that wouldn't have been put in place otherwise. You know it was put in place with all these investment dollars, that sadly a lot of us paid for, but also a lot of big business paid for, too. And they laid all this wire, there's a lot more access, computers are a lot cheaper, there's a lot more computer literacy, a lot more people know about what the Internet is, and most people realize that the dot-com period was just a bubble and that this is not actually a place to make money. You know so they built all these roads and now we can go play on them again.

So now you start seeing things coming back that I thought were gone forever. You

know “slash-dot” style bulletin boards are everywhere; you can take the slash-dot code and use it wherever you want—it’s an open source platform. Or you know or blogs and weblogs—you know people posting their own experiences. You know, for me the Internet is healthy when people, when people’s hands are on the keyboard, when they are participating in the writing of the stories that are going on there, when they are sharing their experiences rather than just being programmed by someone else’s. And, as far as I can tell, the Internet is becoming more and more and more about that. . . .For a lot of people, they’ve got no interest in that. A lot of people, they wanted it to be a shopping catalog, and they’ll always use it as that. I mean not everyone in the world wants to share narratives and reconstruct the world and participate in the unfolding of reality. But I think there are more opportunities to do that online everyday.

I think that the monopolization of the media is a short-term phenomenon. I think that AOL-Time-Warner is doomed. I think they’re destined for a real awakening. I think the kinds of people that are leaving that company now from Levin right on down to Righters are people who understand that this is not a company run by human beings anymore, that this is a company run by machines. And I mean that honestly. This is a company that is run by the bottom line, by the balance sheet, and the balance sheet is not human; a balance sheet is what computers are based on, is these columns and data and a number. And when a company is addicted to a number rather than to true long-term gross and possibility, they end up creating a monocle, for they end up destroying their top soil the same way the American agriculture industry has destroyed the top soil in this country. And you lose diversity. You end up with nowhere you can you can move.

You know when Westinghouse owns CBS and prevents *Sixty Minutes* from doing a report on the Casini-launch because they might make some of the parts that are going into that rocket you end up with a less valuable franchise. And then *Sixty Minutes* is no longer *Sixty Minutes*. It ends up they have nowhere they can turn, so a monopoly in a media space is not only an oxy-moron but it’s a liability. You know in an interactive media space what you want is as much diversity as possible. You know you want to, if anything, apply the microbrewery tactic where you’ve got many sub-brands that are seemingly different from the major one, but in a media space they have to be actually different. And a media monopoly with as much at stake in the military industrial complex can’t create media that calls any of that into question. Except in a fake way, except in a Limp Bizkit kind of rebellion. So as people get smarter, monolithic media companies lose their value.

RICHARD FALK

The Resonance of bin Laden's Message in the Arab World

I think one needs to understand that while Osama bin Laden is an extremist and visionary and is capable of training dedicated warriors that are suicidal in their willingness to pursue his view of the encounter between the West and America and the Islamic world, what makes the bin Laden resistance to American power so potent is not only the tactics he used, but the fact that his message has a very wide resonance in the Arab world, and to some degree, in the Islamic world in general. It's a resonance that's based on two factors, I think. One is, the inability of the secular governments, secular Arab governments, to do anything to solve the fundamental problems of the Islamic world, of which the failure of the Palestinians to achieve self-determination is at the top of the list. And the frustration, futility and humiliation associated with the Arab inability to secure the rights of the Palestinian people under/over for all of this period has shown many people that one needs a different approach. And the different approach is what bin Laden, and before him Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran, expressed and that was a reliance on Islam, on tradition, on radical Islam, as the basis for a much more substantial resistance than what the secular Arab governments, the entrenched Arab governments, even the more religiously oriented ones like Saudi Arabia. They have all proved to be neutralized by U.S. power, economic power and military power. And they have not expressed real solidarity with the Palestinian people.

So in the wider Arab world there is a sense of satisfaction that finally some form of effective resistance to American power has been manifested and some of the suffering that the Palestinians and the Arab world have endured is now also being experienced by America, and Americans. And so this is the second reason why one needs to be very sensitive to the idea that this is not an isolated cult of the sort that some religious extremists groups—Aum Shinrikyô group in Japan, for instance, represented also an apocalyptic idea about the reconstruction of society around religious and traditional principles, but it, it didn't have any resonance within the broad framework of society. Here, the message of bin Laden has this broad resonance. And his methods, however [void] of morality, other principles of restraint have shown a path that is effective, or seems to be effective, or **more** effective than anything that was obtained by traditional politics.

Well, I think one would—one has to go back a little bit to the discussion of why does the Islamic world resent the role of the United States in the world, and I think that the most widely shared basis of resentment is the perception that the United States has reinforced, economically and militarily, Israel's unjust domination of the Palestinian land and Israel's failure to allow the Palestinians to complete the process of de-colonization essentially, that both Israel and Palestine derive from an earlier colonial status, a mandated Palestine administered by Britain as a colonial entity. Israel has become a sovereign state, as of 1948, and for all this period of time, the Palestinians have been denied an equivalent right, which had been given to them by the United Nations back in 1947. And then since 1967, what remained of the Palestinian portion of that original mandate, which is only 22% of the initial Palestine—that has been not only occupied but it's also been encroached upon through the establishment of these network of settlements that are owned and are linked to Israel by bypass roads and a series of links on which only Israelis can travel, even though they're in the heartland of what is supposed to be Palestine. So it looks to—and then, then the problems of Jerusalem are also very connected with this—the Islamic world

does not want to have to be subject to Israeli security and monitoring in order to visit and pray at the mosques in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is considered the third holy city of the Islamic world. And the international community had recognized that it was a city sacred to three different religions and that it should be substantially internationalized, that it shouldn't belong to any state but should be an international city. All of these reasonable goals of Palestinian self-determination of an international Jerusalem have been defeated in the eyes of many parts of the Islamic world by the interposition of American military power and diplomatic **muscle**. There is a sense that this is defeating a normal relationship between the United States and that part of the world.

And there have been advocates over the years in the U.S. government—they are called often Arabists—who have favored a genuinely balanced approach to the two peoples and have argued that this is in the strategic interests of the United States, that it relates to stabilizing access to oil and to avoiding the emergence of political extremism in the region, and this view has consistently lost out in the internal debates within the U.S. government. And I think it's lost out not because the arguments of those that are unconditionally pro-Israeli are more powerful, but because the domestic political equation has to be considered. And domestically, the organized pro-Israeli presence and its support in the U.S. congress and in the media is so overwhelming that it never seems to be in the interest of the politician who is subject to reelection in two or four years to stand up against that kind of a raid and a determined use of influence. And the few individuals who have stood up over the years have generally found themselves the objects of bitter attacks and highly financed campaigns of their opponents, and they've often been, generally been, defeated politically. And so there, it is a kind of hammerlock that the pro-Israeli forces have on the formation of U.S. policy. It's very hard to see how that can be broken.

Arab-Americans & U.S. Hypocrisy

Well, I think, in the background of course, is a long-term demonization of Islam and of the Arab world. And September 11th has reactivated those in policies, and the mainstream media has certainly contributed to that end. There has been, at least a formal effort by the U.S. government to make it clear that its objectives are global terrorism and not Islam, and to try to reassure Americans—Arab-Americans and others of Islamic background—that they are not, that they should be protected in their Constitutional rights while, at the same time, using the security argument to detain particularly those of Arab background, who don't, who are not citizens and to subject people of Arab-American background to much closer scrutiny than had been the case before. So they had to justify a certain degree of ritual profiling. So all of these features do contribute to an atmosphere where there is a lot of hostility directed at the Islamic community. There have been many incidents at the Islamic. . . And, I think not enough has been done to protect the Islamic presence in American society and also to suggest that Islam is not the source of the problem. The problem arises from this interaction between deeply seeded grievances and a form of political extremism that has emerged out of the Islamic world.

Post-9/11 Media Coverage of the Israel/Palestine Conflict

Israel enjoys a great deal of access to the power elite, both within the media and within government. And many of the most influential decision makers, both in the media and government, are intrinsically oriented very much toward a pro-Israeli position in any event and see their own politics as very much shaped by support for Israel. *The Wall Street Journal* is a

notable example of that sort of point of view, where its editorial pages are really more militarist on the Israel-Palestine relationship than the U.S. government, and sometimes more than even the Israeli government—that they see no basis for any kind of negotiated end to the conflict, that they fully validate all the tactics that Israel has employed, including political assassinations and intrusions into the Palestinian territories. And they have no empathy or caring, understanding, of the ordeal of the Palestinian people under these conditions of occupation. And what is very blatant in *The Wall Street Journal*, I think, is in a more subtle way expressed by most of the mainstream media that deals with these issues.

And since September 11th, that treatment is intensified by the inability of most of the TV people, particularly to distinguish between the Palestinian terrorism and the al-Qaeda threat. And they don't understand that the Palestinian recourse to violence is as a mode of resistance to a form of occupation that's gone on for more than thirty years that doesn't even acknowledge the guidelines of international humanitarian law, doesn't respect the Geneva Convention, has constantly tried to create threats on the ground that interfere with Palestinian rights of self determination, especially the establishment of more than two hundred settlements with more than 400,000 Israelis living in them has also altered the nature of Jerusalem, has made it much more difficult for Palestine under any conditions to emerge with a state of their own that enjoys equivalent sovereign status to the Israel state and also has some rights to uphold its own security.

I think that the hard line Zionist attempt for several decades has been to associate criticism of Israel or Zionism with anti-Semitism, and so, and to try to occupy all the moral space by making that contention and linking it either directly or indirectly to the experience of the Holocaust and the unacceptability of anyone. . .any criticism [to] be directed at the Jewish state which has risen out of the victimization of Jews through the Nazi experience. And thus, if Jews themselves express criticism of the way in which Israel and Zionism operate, then from that viewpoint, the only way to explain it is to castigate those that take such a position and are Jewish as being self-hating Jews. Because uh to put it any other way would be to admit that there is a kind of domain of legitimate disagreement among Jews as to the nature and historic role of Zionism as well as to the wrong-doing of the Israeli state. And this kind of argumentation is one that is very hard to confront very directly.

And I think the best way to try to deal with it, as I've had to deal with myself on various occasions, is to point out that I don't consider myself an unpatriotic American because I criticize the U.S. government or some of the undertakings that it is associated with or even its global ideology. And that what it means to be in a democratic society is to have the opportunity to disagree. And certainly if you look at what the state of Israel has done from this perspective, either of international law or of international human rights, it would—It's hard for an objective person not to be highly critical. And so, one has to say that just because one's ethnic identity is Jewish is no reason to suppose that a critic of these policies is not entitled to voice those criticisms and to engage in debate. If there's a very substantive response to the criticism, that's fine, but to attack the critic rather than the criticism by suggesting that their motives are somehow associated with a psychological rejection of their own **self** seems to be very strained and unfortunate.

MICHAEL FRANTI

9/11, Vulnerability, Music and Hope

My first reaction, my first emotion I had, was the sense of feeling of having the wind knocked out of me, like, “Wow. Is this really happening?” You know? And a sense of shock and disbelief, horror. And then within minutes, there [were] already pundits—the ‘punditocracy’ was on TV—trying to explain what happened—who did it, who was responsible and how we were going to go get them. And I was horrified to see that they were already constructing this whole mythology for war. And so what I did was I just tried to turn off the TV, and I just tried to be with the feelings. And I imagined, do I know anyone in New York who was working around there at the time? And really just try to live with the feelings of sadness, of mourning. And in the days following that, too, I didn’t go out and do—you know I got a lot of requests to do interviews and whatnot, and I said, “No, this is a time of mourning for me, and I want to just stay with those feelings.” Because I thought, I want to be able to hold onto those feelings that whatever actions I took next would be guided by those emotions, and I didn’t want to be guided by my anger at the media or my anger at the government. I wanted to be guided by my sense of connection to humanity.

And so the next thing we did was the Sunday following that Tuesday we organized a concert in San Francisco with some people from Global Exchange, and it was a concert that declared San Francisco a hate-free zone. And we teamed up with some Arab and Muslim businesses in San Francisco who were under attack and getting threats and having windows broken and whatnot. And we brought together musicians from the Arab and Muslim communities, as well as the Jewish community and others, to perform music and a concert to try to bring together the peace community. And traditionally, San Francisco has always been known for its activism, as well as New York, but we all felt like with what had happened with this event taking place in New York, it was going to be hard for people in New York, especially, to be really as vocal as we could be on the west coast. So we wanted to bring that community together—and together in peace, together not in anger. And to say, you know, “Although we’re mourning, and although we’re sad, this is not a cry for war.”

And I think that music is one of the final frontiers. Music is one place where you can still have the ability to write a song and get up on stage with a guitar and say it to a few people. And after all this stuff has gone on, I’ve been studying a lot of Buddhism, reading people like Thich Nhat Hanh, and in Buddhism, they talk about happiness as being the relief from suffering and that all of us our suffering all the time—through our stress of life, through economic injustice, through political injustice, military injustice, or just the internal turmoil we have from things that have happened in our lives, stresses about our hopes for the future. And to bring about relief from suffering should be a goal for us in terms of creating happiness in the world. And through music, I see a way of doing that. I see that if just through the notes of soothing of somebody or helping somebody to get out their anger or their frustration out through the intensity of the music in a safe way that that is a relief from suffering. And sometimes, music has the ability to also convey words that mean something to people, that can help to relieve suffering. And art—practicing the expression of our emotions in a peaceful way, through creativity, through video, through film, through writing, through painting, through dancing, through creating food, through communing together, through making love, through whatever it is we can do to be creative—is helping to communicate that message in the world.

The Need for Global Perspective

Well, I think it's really difficult with the way that the media is presenting things to show people, to relate to people, to communicate that we're all one. You don't see the effects of bombing in Kabul and Kandahar, and you don't see the limbs blown off of people, and you don't see any children dead. You don't see the hospitals blown up, you don't see the mosques blown up, the schools blown up. You just see this quote-unquote "surgical bombing," which is kind of like going after your wisdom teeth with an ax. So most people still don't make the connection that the tears of a mother in New York are the same as the tears of a mother in any part of the world. And they have been believing this notion that you can simultaneously engage in a humanitarian effort and a war at the same time. Because we drop little bits of food on some people—it's not part of their diet, it's not enough to get them more than food for one day, and it's not enough for the millions of people who need food. So it's this myth that they've created that we're doing this just thing.

I've been astounded that there isn't a healthy disbelief in what we're being told. There isn't a healthy devil's advocacy that's being played by anybody, and especially musicians. As a musician, I always feel like rock and roll or hip hop or something should just be against the system almost just because it's the only thing that can be against the system. And that we should be questioning, not because we feel that we're right but just because the system needs to be put in check and needs to be questioned, even if we come to the same conclusions that they do, which we probably won't.

And I think there is a fine line between patriotism and nationalism. And patriotism is when you say, "My country does some good things and some bad things, and I want to support the good things and speak out very strongly against the bad things." And nationalism is when you say, "The government is the government, and I'm going to follow right behind them no matter what they say." And I think that in this millenium patriotism is no longer enough. It is not enough to be just patriotic; you have to have a world perspective because—and maybe for all time, I shouldn't even say for this millenium, but now is the time when people really need to start thinking about what does it mean, that concept of "one love" as Bob Marley puts it. As soon as one person dies, it's not an attack against Americans—it's an attack against the body that is destroyed. As soon as one bomb is dropped and destroys a mountainside, it's one body of the natural world that we're destroying. And it's going to affect all of us ultimately. So I think the more that we can make the connection that we're one person and we're not just nations—we're not just people versus the earth, but that we're part of the earth—the more we can draw those connections, the more that message will release out.

Post-9/11 Global Justice Activism

I don't think it's any coincidence that what happened with this movement against the World Trade Organization and what's happening with the World Bank, IMF, all these things and the conference in Durban on racism and the fact that the U.S. wasn't there and participating, that they were there as disruptors, and reparations and what's happening with Zionism in Israel—you know I don't know the exact equation behind what happened leading up to September 11th, but I do know that there has been a climate in this world that has led up to a lot of anger and a lot of hostility, and I don't think it's any coincidence that these happened a week after the conference on racism. I think these things are all interconnected. So I what I would say is that I hope that

the people who are in the anti-globalization movement would be able to draw the distinction between all these things, to be able to connect the dots and see that the way that we are economically hijacking the rest of the world is only creating a soil and an environment for angry people to lash out, and that is the only way that some people feel that they can communicate their message.

And so what that means on the level of the [global justice] movement is that we have to think about our methods of what we're doing to communicate. If we're going to go to a protest and throw some bottles at cops, it's maybe fun, maybe exhilarating it may be adrenalizing, but it's doing a disservice in communicating our message—our message being peace, our message being economic justice, our message being environmental care-taking rather than environmental destruction, our message against genetically modified foods. Our message of social justice across the board is being disserved when we resort to violence. And those people who have chosen violence have done so in a way that is maybe smart for using that means—they go off in the jungle or the desert, and they train, they learn violence, they learn how to do it. For us as peace people, who spend most of our time going to our jobs and doing the things we do on a daily basis, to go out in the street and engage in throwing bottles against police who have armed themselves to the hilt is insanity on a personal level and is doing a disservice to our goals. So I think it calls upon each of us to find that peace in our hearts, and whatever peace that we find is going to be fuel for this movement, to grow and to sustain itself.

And we have to become very mindful of our approach to it, but I think that right now is a winter—we had the wind knocked out of us by this thing, all of us, as a world, had the wind knocked out of us. Now is the time when we're finally being able to inhale again and to take stock. The wintertime is the time when we cut the dead branches, when we prepare for the spring, we prepare for what is the next creative process of growing something beautiful out of this dark time. And so now is the time when we have to prepare. So when this new year comes about, let's use that use the changing of the clock as not just a marking of time, but let's use that as a time when we're going to start something new, and let's re-galvanize this movement and figure out specifically what our goals are, what we're trying to communicate, and let's go and communicate it to the world in the most peaceful and positive and loving way that is going to be an invitation to others to come on board. Because as time goes on, this war, like all wars, is going to sour, and people who supported it at the beginning are going to say, "Is the world really safer now? Do I really feel happier? Are the billions of dollars that we took out of the schools and out of all the other things domestically worth going over and bombing this poor country?" And I think that the answer is always going to be that you can never lose if you choose the side of peace—you're always going to be right. It's an oxymoron—a Just War—there is no just war, there is just war.

Are you optimistic about the future?

I am an eternal optimist. I believe that goodness is always going to be one step ahead of evil. The reason I believe is because people will always choose goodness—you give someone the option of good and bad, and they're always going to choose good. I don't think anyone starts off in their life thinking, "I want to be a bad person." Everyone wants to be good, but a lot of times the distinction is unclear and we're told messages that if you do this, you're following the good guys; if you do that, you're following the bad guys. That's why I think it's just a matter of time before people can communicate more clearly about what is happening in the world and

about justice on a mass scale, on a world scale. But I don't engage in something that I feel that I can't complete. I don't want to start something that I can't finish, so I'm not going to start into this thinking that it's futile.

I'm only going to join this movement for peace if I feel like it's realistic, and I also think that each of us has a responsibility to the seven generations of people that came before us and the seven generations to come to make this world a better place and to make this world the best place it could possibly be. And so I feel a responsibility to my ancestors and to my children and grandchildren to be engaged in this. At the same time, I also feel like it's important for us to maintain a balance, a synchronicity, so that we don't quit. And the music is part of that—synchronicity, to be able to have fun, to give voice to our emotions, to let our feelings out in a safe way, and to commune with other people, and to experience joy, to experience our connection to when the human intersects with the divine, those moments when we cry in joy and those moments when we laugh in joy. And so I'm very optimistic for the future, but I hope the future gets here quick.

MARK CRISPIN MILLER

What has the media coverage been like since 9/11?

The immediate coverage of 9/11 was riveting, of course, because everyone just wanted to know what was going on at the most basic level and the media were in a position to show us the act itself, which obviously had been committed precisely for such broadcast. So I, like everybody else, was glued to the set even though it took place about a mile from where I live. And I'd go out into the street and get a sense of what was going on out there and go back and watch for more reports. It was a traumatic moment, obviously. And because it was traumatic, I think that the ordinary tone that interrupted the usual way of doing things had been knocked askew. This is inevitable. They didn't have to cut very deep; they didn't have to do any investigation or anything like that; they just had to react to what was going on, relay reports. There were a lot of rumors flying, as you may recall, the first day. You know, a bomb went off at the State Department, seven planes were going to crash or had crashed. It was an hysterical moment. And then, for about three weeks, it was surprisingly diverse. The coverage was unusual. I'm not saying it was ideal. It was more inclusive and more interesting and a bit more critical than you would ordinarily expect.

My benchmark is the Gulf War coverage, which observed sort of an iron unanimity. This time you saw a lot of footage of Afghan refugees, which I thought was a good thing because it humanized the potential victims of any military action. And the more of such footage people saw, I think the more mass uneasiness there was about a military response. There were actual mainstream acknowledgements of the CIA's role in the creation of the Mujahadin as an anti-Soviet force. In fact, there was a particularly good *Nightline* on this whole episode—surprisingly good. You couldn't claim, as you had to claim back in '90 and '91, that the mainstream media were repressing the prehistory. Saddam Hussein had been the darling of the Reagan and Bush administrations. They'd been lobbying sanctions on this guy, and then all of a sudden he's another Hitler.

So there was a nebulosity to the coverage that was interesting. And you did see people included in the discussion whom you wouldn't ordinarily expect to see. But as soon as the war started, that all changed, all out the window. And not only did it change, but it actually became—and I wouldn't have thought this was possible—it became even more lockstep than it was ten years ago. It was bad enough ten years ago. But ten years ago you had a lot of interviews with ground troops. Now, it was for propaganda purposes because they were all pretty much with the program. On the first night of Desert Storm, for example, you had all these CNN people at these towns near military bases. In fact, that's the only place you saw them. They only went where there would be a lot of pro-military sentiment. Nevertheless, that being the case, you did get a lot of unscripted, spontaneous reaction from troops and troops' families. This time there was nothing like that. This time they seemed to have left nothing at all to chance. They only had generals active and retired in front of the cameras and the usual range of foreign policy hawks.

Bush was lionized, exalted with a kind of deliberateness that you didn't see ten years ago because you didn't have to see it ten years ago. I mean, Bush Sr. was not terribly popular except in times of war, but there wasn't the kind of pall over his presidency that there is over his son's presidency. And it wasn't a sense of a kind of dangerous inexperience and maybe temperamental disinclination to be a great commander-in-chief. People basically thought he

could handle it. People didn't think that George W. Bush could handle this, and the coverage reflected it. There were... there was one show in particular on CNN—it must have been a month after the war started—that looked like a joint production by the network and the White House basically having people around Bush tell John Cain of CNN what a terrific job Bush had been doing in private. How steely, how assured, how commanding he was. Now why is he telling us this, you know? They're telling us this because they are trying to argue against the reality. Which is also, to some extent, the stereotype of George W. Bush.

All that and the considerable absences or gaps in the coverage, all the aspects of the story that have been covered abroad and that do nuance the picture and complicate it—all that's been missing from the American coverage. It's just a tale of pluck and daring by the American and to some extent the British forces. Very simple, a righteous cause, no complications. The Northern Alliance are the good guys, the Taliban are the bad guys. All this stuff is insane, ridiculous. The geopolitical context—not a whisper about any of that. Further evidence that the Bush administration was actually threatening Afghanistan before 9/11—none of that. Evidence that the CIA had actually gotten close to bin Laden fairly recently, reported in *Le Figaro*, not here. In fact, a lot of this stuff was even missing from *The New York Times*. The prison uprising that took place not long ago: you compare the *Times* coverage of that event with the coverage in *The Guardian*, you get a very instructive sense of the kind of pressure that patriotism, so-called, can often put on coverage because the story as it's recounted in our nation's leading newspaper was pretty simple and regrettable. Whereas *The Guardian's* story was a story of a number of likely war crimes and gross incompetence that happens in wars. But we're getting the same kind of fairy tale picture that unfortunately people have often gotten and they always learn the hard way.

I think people can break through the propaganda on their own by basically making a full-time job out of staying online and reading as much coverage as you can read, piece things together that way. Read *The Guardian*, read *The Independent*, read *The Times of India*—a terrific paper, read the French press if you can read French, read the German press if you can read German. Just cast your net wide, I'd say. Read *Newsweek* and read *In These Times*. It's a lot of work. And get yourself subscribed to a number of listservs. You will be drowning in information. And of course a lot of this stuff that comes over the transom when you're online is insane, you know; that's one of the risks you run when you get your information that way. So you've got to use your judgement and verify sources and so on. And you've got to pass this stuff around so you sort of broaden the area occupied by those who have a somewhat fuller sense of what is happening. Try to educate other people a little bit. That's really all you can do right now.

The Myth of the Liberal Media

I should have drafted *The Bush Dyslexicon* to a friend of mine who teaches history at Hopkins because I wanted his advice and he said, "This book really makes clear that the notion of a liberal media is completely baseless, so I think you should underscore that." And indeed I did. *The Bush Dyslexicon*, I think, can persuade any reasonable person that there are no grounds, whatsoever, for the venerable right wing claim that we are a liberal media system. It's preposterous on its face. There is no evidence for that claim, none. However, there is abundant evidence for the opposite claim that we have a media system heavily skewed toward the right.

If we have a media with a liberal bias, how did the anti-Clinton jihad get so far based

on no evidence at all? The liberal *New York Times* actually carried the torch here for years and distorted the facts as Gene Lyons and Joe Conason have demonstrated. They never really engaged in any criticism of Clinton from a progressive point of view. They embraced free trade, they embraced welfare reform, they embrace everything. They embrace banking deregulation, they embrace media deregulation, they embrace the drug war. Where's all the labor news if we have a liberally biased media? I could go on and on. What recent war has been witheringly covered by the liberal media? I wish one of them were in the room now or at least could send us an e-mail giving us some examples of how we have a liberal media system.

And in fact, on economic grounds, Professor David Croteau of Virginia Commonwealth University has proven in his excellent survey that they—'Washington Press Core on Economic Issues'—hold views considerably to the right of the American majority of corporate power, the minimum wage, free trade, you name it... health insurance. They are all pretty wealthy. They are the haves. Our media system is a corporate system. It is owned by the likes of General Electric, Rupert Murdoch, Disney, Viacom—where does the liberalism come in? Now very often this is a codeword for the Jews. And when people say we have a liberal media system, they mean the Jews control the media, which is an old, old myth. It goes back to the protocol of the elders of Zion. And Henry Ford was instrumental in promoting it in this country in the '20s, and the Nazis ran with it. And it's still very widespread in the heartland and in the Black community as well. But even that's not true. I mean the ownership of the media rests with multinational corporations and their major shareholders. Their Warren Buffets—AT&T owns a piece of several big media corporations; it is itself a major media corporation. It's capital. That's what it is. And it does what it needs to do to grow itself.

To that end, any kind of news that might interfere just doesn't get reported. That and the fact that the right wing propaganda drive to discredit the media as a liberal entity, *that* has worked finally. That has made all kinds of reporters gun shy so they bend over backwards not to cut any slack to anyone who might remotely be deemed liberal. Therefore, the mistreatment of the Clintons, who aren't liberals. They're good Republicans, as far as I'm concerned. The idiotic mistreatment of Al Gore for his woodenness. The guy's almost as conservative as Bush. But they stand for the liberal and, therefore, they take all this preposterous abuse. That's a complete misconception, and I hope that if *The Bush Dyslexicon* does anything, aside from make people laugh a little bit, I hope it helps to make the case that we have the kind of media system we really do have.

We're constantly being confronted with big debates. Big debates between position A and position B. Or position A and position Z. And more often than not, the debate is irrelevant. It's kind of a side issue or a smokescreen. And the liberal media's a good example. Do we have a liberal media or don't we have a liberal media? So people will argue one way or the other, but while that argument is raging, no one will even think to say wait a minute, why are we even asking if we have a liberal media system? Do you know what I'm saying? It's like asking are the Nazis Zionists or are they not Zionists? An inflammatory comparison, I know, but the fact is we don't have a liberal media system. We have a media system dominated by corporate interests. We should be asking, do we have a corporate media or don't we? Do we have a monopolized media system or don't we? Do we have a fair and trustworthy media system or don't we? Do we have a criminally trivial media system or don't we? Those are the kinds of questions we should ask, but we can't ask them because to ask them is to be accused of liberal bias, you see. So in a way it's kind of a magic system that protects itself from any kind of scrutiny or disproof.

War Hysteria & Repression of Dissent

What's going on now is a kind of war hysteria. It's very upsetting, very disorienting, it's scary, but it's not unprecedented. Countries have gone through stuff like this repeatedly—many countries have. We went through it in 1798 when we thought the French were going to invade us and that saw the imposition of the Alien and Sedition Act by John Adams, who lately has been rehabilitated of course as a precursor of the greatest generation. Of course it went on in a big way during WWI and a little bit after WWI with the first Red Scare. And it went on during the McCarthy period and so on. And I'm not saying that those are the only moments when we've had government repression of dissent, but those are the moments when we have widespread government dissent and widespread massive port for that repression—that's what we have now. And when you have that going on, certain aids, certain instruments, certain tools that are ordinarily indispensable can't be used.

With a lot of people you just can't make a rational case. You can't point out that a certain position doesn't make any sense logically or if there's no evidence for it. In other words, the kinds of things that one would want to say in reply to many of the things that George W. Bush says or that John Ashcroft says. You could talk until you're blue in the face... it won't help because people are out to lunch, you know. They're hysterical, they're afraid, they're angry. And when that's the case you just have to wait until the fever cools, that's all you can do. You can also forget about certain kinds of moral arguments that during longer wars will eventually have an impact on public opinion. The Vietnam War, for example, started to upset people primarily because of the rising body count of American soldiers. But that's the real reason people turned against the war. It wasn't because Walter Cronkite decided he didn't like it anymore, it was because a lot of Americans were coming home in body bags. That tends to have a depressive effect on mass opinion. That effect was enhanced by the increasing news of atrocities committed by our side over there. So we could see it wasn't a John Wayne movie. It took a long time, but finally there was no way to maintain that particular crusade.

Well, now that we've been hit on our own soil and so many have died so horribly, you can't make the arguments that you might want to make. I find it personally obscene that so many people can so casually shrug off the idea of a million or two million Afghans dying of starvation or cold. Five million, seven million. It's "Oh, well. That's just the way it goes because of the 3500 dead Americans." I mean, that's Nazi thinking as far as I'm concerned. And we see it everywhere, you know. It's, and I hate to say this, but it's human nature to some extent. The people who are other, you don't really care about their lives that much. The people who remind you of you, however, are precious, you know. We don't have a monopoly on that kind of thinking, but we do have the ability to realize that fantasy in a really bloody way. So I find it sickening when I encounter it, and of course you encounter it all the time. But I'm not going to use that argument with certain people because it just makes them mad.

When people are afraid and when they want to feel secure and righteous and they want to feel like we're doing something and we're fighting back. To say, "Well look, we're killing all these people," it's just going to make them mad. You know, they don't want to hear that. So if our aim is to try to modify the policy, even if only a little bit, or even if our aim is to try to bring people around, I think we have to be more pragmatic. And I think that what we have to do is, first of all, to make the argument against this adventure and similar adventures on the grounds of enlightened self-interest. We were the victims of a terrorist attack. What do we want most of all, aside from bringing the perpetrator to justice? We want to prevent a recurrence. We don't

want anybody else to die like that. Now, is this kind of reaction going to prevent such a recurrence? A lot of people will say “yes.” And you have to ask them, prove that. How many countries have stamped out terrorism through violence? How many have been successful at that? You ask them that question.

You also ask them if they agree that the purpose of this act was to pull us into a war, to polarize the world as Osama bin Laden has said. If they concede that that does seem to be the purpose of so spectacular and heinous a deed, then shouldn't we raise questions of whether we want to give them what they asked for? If these are people who don't mind dying, how can someone argue in response, well they fear brute force and nothing else. Now I grant you that I'm starting to contradict myself because I'm already using rational arguments. I'm talking about the people who it's possible to reclaim, who are sort of just on the verge of being able to think clearly again. And I'm saying you can reach them by appealing to their self-interest.

Why did you write *The Bush Dyslexicon*?

I decided to do a book called *The Bush Dyslexicon*; I actually made the decision after December 12 of 2000. That was the day of infamy when the court intervened to stop the recount, and I was profoundly depressed by that move. I thought things probably couldn't get much worse. All I had to do was wait, though, because they got a lot worse. But as a betrayal of democracy I thought this was a real nonpareil, you know? And I was really down, I almost got paralyzed, so I thought vaguely I should write something that would get me out of this and literally in the night the title popped into my head—*The Bush Dyslexicon*—I thought it was really funny. And, indeed, my first impulse was to do a collection of his silly remarks. But I looked into it and heard that Jacob Weisberg was going to do a book—he's the guy that had been collecting them for slate and still is. So I thought, that's what I'll do.

So I started reading through the transcripts, but I'm kind of compulsive and I was reading everything. I was reading entire exchanges and reading what the press people said to him and so on and I realized a funny catalogue of slips isn't really appropriate basically because I don't think that's the problem, just that he doesn't speak grammatical English. I don't think he's stupid. I don't think there's anything to be gained in just making fun of him. And I don't think he's benign. And the caricature of George W. Bush as a sort of hopeless cretin always represents him as basically sweet-tempered. Like on that short lived sitcom *That's My Bush*, or the way they did him on *Saturday Night Live* as kind of an amiable doofus, you know. And the more I read, the more I had to conclude that there's nothing amiable about this guy. Moreover, I realized, it's not about him, it's about the media because the media was his enabler and played a very important role in his campaign and in the race, throughout which their coverage was markedly biased.

The dyslexia that really afflicts us collectively, it seems to me, has to do with the way the media refuses to take in evidence of what's going on. If you look at the body politic as an entity of whose head, whose brain is the media system with a great neural network of anchors and pundits and correspondents and producers and so on... that mind is a little bit like a dyslexic person. A dyslexic can't translate written symbols into sounds. There's something wrong with that passageway that, connection. The media system won't read the writing on the wall. So television as a medium was quite merciless of George W. Bush as it's been merciless with many modern presidents: Johnson, Nixon, George Bush Sr. Television has been extremely good to Eisenhower, Reagan, Clinton, Kennedy of course. Some politicians can glow on TV, others TV

works on them like an X-ray machine. It shows insecurities of various kinds and it's devastating. I think television is a medium that's served us well with George W. Bush because you can see what an awkward, thin-skinned, defensive, hot-head he is. Clueless as to the fine points of his own programs. His performance—all through the debates—was by any rational standard embarrassing. Although the pundits kept spinning it as “pretty good, really pretty good.” That's the point. The medium served us well. Television served us well.

TV, the industry, kept denying the evidence the television showed us, talking it away as if they were working for the Bush/Cheney machine outright. So *The Bush Dyslexicon* is an attempt to demonstrate that there was that gap. Go back now, read the transcripts that were in the *Dyslexicon*. There it is in black and white: this is what he said, this is what the press said about what he said. Make up your own mind, you know. I don't take anything out of context in this book. I even refute a few claims made to his discredit because they're actually wrong or unfair and provide the whole context. I even give entire exchanges. I also have a chapter for his father because they actually have a lot in common linguistically. A long introduction about TV and politics in the 20th century and then an afterward that basically makes the case that we're in grave danger because democracy has been betrayed both by right wing interests and by the corporate media.

And I was referring to the effect of the election in 2000 that has been proven now by the national opinion research center. Although the way the press reported it was unbelievable and it's an obvious attempt to exonerate the Bush people. But they did steal the election, they did. And now we have this kind of police state looming before us, saying people are bringing us... Sometimes it's not so pleasant to feel vindicated. Sometimes you feel you wish you were just wrong and people could say, “See, you were hysterical.” I could live with that. But I do think the book still has a lot to say and it sheds a lot of light on the man and on the moment. Now after 9/11, the book became sort of a taboo thing. Barnes and Noble—at certain stores I'd already done readings—cancelled a couple of upcoming events, one at the big store on 5th Avenue and one at the University of Pennsylvania bookstore. The reason they gave was “a concern for my safety.” And I don't actually doubt their sincerity. I think they were concerned. My complaint has to do less with their inclination to protect me than with their unilateral decision. Because I could have talked about Bush and the book and the moment without reading from the book, which would have been a kind of breach of decorum, given the moment. I mean, I'm smart enough to see that. I don't want to get hurt either, but I mean I have talked about all this and could have done it if they'd only asked me. But they, you know, and this is the crucial thing here: Barnes and Noble's the biggest bookstore chain in the country. They've got tons of cultural power, and they're in a position to make decisions like that without consulting anybody. And that gives them a kind of capacity for censorship, deliberate or inadvertent, that should give us pause. When any of these entities has such reach that their whims can prevent people from pointing stuff out, I think we should raise questions about it. Anyway, I've talked to people like you, talked to groups at independent bookstores, done progressive radio interviews and so on, and I've engaged in e-mail correspondences with a lot of people, many of them off-the-wall with hostility. You know, you take the temperature of the times, the thermometer explodes. It's pretty striking, but I don't think kind of thing will last forever.

What have you observed in Bush's response to 9/11?

Before 9/11, making fun of George Bush for his grammatical mistakes was a very

popular sort of indoor sport and a frequent TV spectacle. After 9/11, there's been this attempt to deny that there was ever a problem with him. Both positions are troubling because there's a big problem with Bush, and it isn't just that in the first couple of days he was awkward and uninspiring and called terrorists "folks" and the all the other things people criticized him for. It isn't just that. For example, you look at the way he would talk about the disaster. You noticed that he would never allow there to be any space for mourning or grief. He was always, "We're sad now, but, we're sad now, but..." It was always "grief, but...", "mourning, but...revenge, revenge, revenge, we're coming to get them." And that had a sort of exhilarating effect in the short term on a lot of people. But it was very destructive. It repressed the moment, the time for grief.

It repressed the opportunity for grief in a way that interestingly Mayor Giuliani didn't do. This is one of the most abrasive public servants of modern times, but somehow in this crisis he found a kind of tenderness inside of him that people really responded to and it was really, for a guy who's so divisive ordinarily, was kind of a healing figure. I hate to use that kind of a buzzword, but everybody felt that he really recognized the gravity of this loss. None of that came from Bush. Bush was all, "Let's shed some blood, let's kick some ass." And that strikes me as dangerous but also characteristic because this is a guy who likes to inflict punishment. This is a guy who really likes to administer the death penalty. This is a guy who likes to say, "No." This is a very, very hard person.

Now, during the long anti-Clinton jihad, it was the usual thing to hear people say Clinton is a psychopath. They say that over and over again. I don't know if Clinton is a psychopath or not. I tend to think he isn't. Psychopaths are characterized by a complete lack of empathy. And I think that Clinton, you know, is actually capable of empathy. I don't think it's theatrical. I think he has a very empathetic nature. I don't think that he follows through on it, but this is my guess. I don't know him. I think he may be a bit of a scoundrel in many ways. I don't admire him politically. But as a person, I don't think he is psychopathic in the straight sense. I do, however, think that George W. Bush may be a psychopath or a sociopath. And I base this, as I say, on a long study of his record for what he has said and so on, but let me just point out two post 9/11 examples that I think helped to make the case. He recently told a crowd about his first reaction about his learning the news about the crash and he said, "When I heard about the crash, I'm a pilot, and I thought, boy.." No sorry, I screwed it up. "When I first heard about the crash, I've flown planes, and I thought to myself, boy that's a really lousy pilot." That was his first reaction. A few seconds later he said, "Oh, the loss of life." He threw that in, you know. But that's not a normal first reaction—"what a lousy pilot." I saw the World Trade Center after the first plane hit it and never in a million years would I have thought to myself, "boy, what a lousy pilot."

He also told his budget director, Mitch Daniels, I want to give you some background here. He had promised not to spend the surplus except in cases of war, recession, or national emergency. And he told Daniels, "Lucky me, I hit the trifecta." Because he had all three now, and he could spend the surplus—"Lucky me, lucky me." Now the mainstream press goes after Chomsky, they go after Susan Sontag, you know for their offensive reactions to this catastrophe. Please, whose reaction was the most offensive? I'd say "lucky me". I'd say that kind of levity suggests a very frightening world view. If you can crack a joke like that, on such a moment, and also on the subject of spending the surplus in times of economic distress, it just takes my breath away. I think we should listen to him when he speaks. I think we should take him seriously. He's not the only one, by the way, who spoke offensively after the attack. The new CEO of

General Electric told a meeting on a whole that they hadn't done too bad for GE because a plane with engines that we built crashed into a building that we insured, and it was covered on a network that we own. I think that's offensive, you know? But it was buried—Harper's reported it. I think we should continue to listen carefully, whatever the press decides to cover.

Post-9/11 Activism and the Threat to Civil Liberties

Any progressive person has his or her particular issues. You can't be into everything. It might be environmental, it might have to do with race, it might have to do with economic justice, it might have to do with the death penalty. We all have our issues, and that's only right. It's a big wide world and there's plenty to do, you know. But there is one thing that we all need, whatever our particular concern may be. What we all need is the freedom to speak, to communicate. If we don't have that we can't work on behalf of any cause. Now, prior to 9/11, I always made this argument in defense of the proposition that media reform was probably the most important issue out there and as you know, an issue that very few people have taken seriously. Because as the media becomes more and more monopolized, there's less space for any kind of truth or discussion even. Well, now since 9/11, I think the problem's gotten much, much worse because not only is the media concentrated to an unprecedented extent, in fact we will shortly see the inclusion of the big newspaper companies in with the larger media corporations. *The Times*, *The Post*, they're all going to be allowed in. So it's getting worse than ever.

But at the same time the government is intent on a kind of crackdown that I think is unprecedented in American history. The Patriot Act seems to contain language that will make all kinds of activism terroristic. Active Greens, people who oppose so-called 'free trade', anyone who protests can be defined or redefined now as a terrorist. And with these military tribunals, anyone who protests and is not a citizen can be plucked from the streets on the basis of presidential whim, kept locked up without any charges, without legal representation. I can't even believe I'm saying it. It's stunning. And if such a person is somehow found guilty by this tribunal of abetting terrorism, the person can be executed on the basis of a majority opinion by the tribunal's judges. Let's say a certain number of them, a couple of them, had to go play golf that day. Let's say there's three left. Two out of three decide, "Let's kill this person because the president thinks he's a terrorist and we think so too." None of this is public, this is right out of Orwell. You know, it's bad news.

Now as I said a moment ago, it is at the moment restricted to non-citizens but I do believe that a system this repressive can be established without interference or modification. They can basically pick up anyone they want this way, either deliberately or by accident they can pick up anybody and dispose of that person or incarcerate that person. The right of habeas corpus has been suspended under this program. Nobody knows where the person is, they can say, "Oh this is a mistake, we're sorry. We thought you were a Tunisian, we didn't know you were from Delaware." But the onus will be on you to prove that you are from here. Maybe you don't have your passport on you. I mean, let's introduce into the picture of deliberate, sinister, carefully planned repression, the eternal fact of bureaucratic incompetence, right? Let's not forget that. I think that incompetence had a great deal to do with 9/11, incompetence on our part. Gross incompetence that has gone unexamined by our media and our congress. Consider both the malevolent intent and the likelihood of incompetence, you've got a very dangerous situation on your hands.

It is striking how quickly the Bush/Cheney regime has come through with this program. I mean, it's almost as if they had something like it on the books. And I wouldn't be surprised. I mean, I don't go in for conspiracy mongering, but if you look at the history of this particular elite. Look at Iran/Contra, for example, in which George Bush Sr. was a major player. During that episode, Ollie North actually drafted a plan to suspend the Constitution, and this was for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, sort of a white paper, to develop a plan for suspension of the Constitution in the event that there was extremely active national resistance to U.S. foreign policy in Nicaragua. That came up just for a moment during the hearings. Jack Brooks of Texas brought it up. And Senator Inouye of Hawaii who was chairing the hearings said, "We have to pursue this in executive sessions, I won't talk about it any more." But it's a fact, it did happen. This is the way they think, this is the way they operate.

You know, for decades we've been instructed that the ultimate anti-democratic threat to this country was communism. That has really never been the case. The ultimate anti-democratic threat to this country is from the right. It's from a very privileged cast that has never charged democratic ideals, that has always been interested in above all, the maintenance of its own privilege. It's very, very close to the oil industry. That had everything to do with the creation and the staffing of the CIA and therefore has been or was for decades deeply involved in the subversion of democratic regimes all over the world. With a record like that, these people cannot inspire confidence in us now. And in fact, George W. Bush has said, it's on the record, "There should be limits to freedom of expression." He said this in angry reaction to a website—gwbushsucks.com—which made fun of him. He wasn't cracking a joke when he said there should be limits to freedom of expression. He was speaking from the heart. He also often cracked the joke that things would often be a lot easier if this were a dictatorship. He said this three times. Many a truth is told in jest. The fact is that despite his occasional ringing references to our great freedoms—always scripted, by the way—he and his people don't believe in it for a minute.

That all being the case, we have to be relentless, relentless in our attention to and condemnation of these infractions, these limitations, these curves. This is an emergency situation. That being the case, I see nothing wrong with making common cause with William Safire, people on the right who have come through, you know purists on the first amendment and will write often and pretty eloquently on how dangerous the situation is. Some of the most repellent people in Congress are actually very exercised about these expanding police powers; of course they're mostly worried about gun control, but still, the idea of constant federal surveillance, the idea of crackdowns on freedom of speech, people like Bob Bar don't like that for their own reasons, so I don't see anything wrong with forging temporary alliances even with these types, you know. Because we have to protect the Bill of Rights. This is a great, great, document. This is the kind of thing that makes one proud to be an American. This is the basis of thoughtful patriotism. Not because we all occupy the same landmass, that's not why. That's just tribal. That's because the ideals of the founders, which the founders themselves routinely violated. I mean, it's taken a long time for the country to sort of live up to the ideals that it's based on. But those ideals are really worth the fight. They're worth dying for because without them there will be no progress. You know, there will be no mercy, no compassion, no justice, and there certainly won't be any movement. So I don't think we should be shy about defining the danger at the moment; it's real.

JANINE JACKSON

The Media & Patriotism

At times like this, where people are very confused and the country is possibly going to be getting involved in military action, are really delicate times for the press. And since the World Trade Center attacks, we've seen, I think, some media much more thoughtful, some journalism much more cautious and responsible than I really expected to see in a time like this, and then I've also seen some really terrible media. Unfortunately, the mainstream U.S. press [isn't] famous for really bringing us critical information about U.S. policy abroad, ever. And when the country is at war, as we're talking about being at war soon, it seems as though the press's willingness to say anything that might be deemed critical of the U.S. administration you know what gumption they had just seems to disappear. There seems to be this impression that for journalists to tell the full story, the kind of unvarnished truth about U.S. policy in central Asia, about U.S. policy in the Mid-East, to get at some of the questions about what are the roots of anti-U.S. sentiment abroad, it's as if to do that kind of journalism would be unpatriotic. And I find that theme that we're hearing from some pundits that for journalists to do anything but march and lock step with the Bush administration is unpatriotic I find that the most disturbing idea that is circulating out there right now, from my point of view as a media critic.

It's always very dangerous when politicians start talking about good people and bad people; it really does send a chill down your spine. In this case, it's particularly ironic for politicians to be saying Anyone who hates the U.S. hates us because of our goodness; therefore they are bad, which sort of clears the way for killing people. And if you think about it, it's really the logic of terrorism to define other human beings as evil, and then therefore say the gloves are off and we can essentially do whatever we want in trying to punish these people; I find it very, very disturbing. And I think people can be misled. If we drop bombs on Afghanistan say, we're not going to be killing terrorism, we're going to be killing human beings. We expect politicians to be rhetorical, we even expect them to mislead or sort of skew the truth in order to get people to support what they want them to support. It's journalists' job to unpack that, to take that apart and to not settle for simple presentations. These people are good; these people are bad that's not journalists' job. It's their job to actually look at the political background, to look at the history, to tell the real story of what's going on in these regions, and to not allow it to be painted in this totally simplistic way. That really is a disservice to public understanding.

War & Civil Liberties

As disturbing as the idea of going to war of going to war against civilians possibly, in this attempt to root out evil-doers wherever they may be I mean that is chilling. But what we're also seeing that's really worrisome to me is politicians trying to push through really regressive measures which, none other than Bob Bar (not a person I generally agree with) . . . But even Congressman Bob Bar pointed out, some of these restrictions on civil liberties this desire to hold immigrants without explaining why for indefinite periods of time these are things that racial profiling, these are policies that people had tried to push through before and were unsuccessful at getting through. And they're essentially using this moment of fear and confusion to push through some really restrictive and frightening measures which people wouldn't have accepted at any other time, and so that's really disturbing. Some of the things we're hearing of, media are

picking this up, too the *New York Times* had a column by Clyde Haberman which essentially said Racial profiling by the New York police, oh we didn't think it was so good, but now this kind of proves that it's really necessary. The *New York Times* also had a new article in which they said Even black people are finding that they're doing racial profiling now, too.

We have to really be on the watch for media claiming to speak for us, the U.S. public. When they say, People now think it's okay if immigrants are detained without explanation because that might protect us from terrorism, people now think it's okay if maybe journalists are restricted in their ability to do their job . . . Well nobody I talk to really thinks that's okay. As much as people want us to figure out what led to these attacks, and as much as people want us to bring to justice the people responsible for these horrible, horrible attacks, nobody that I talk to and that's really left *or* right thinks that the United States should throw away all of its freedoms and its civil liberties in that effort. In fact, people believe it's an opportunity for us to more carefully define what exactly we do value in terms of freedom of expression, in terms of freedom of assembly. We want to talk about those things, but no one I talk to is in the mood to throw that stuff out. In fact, we think if we're defending anything, isn't it just those things?

The Media & Anti-Arab Sentiment

The U.S. media have a lot to answer for when we're talking about anti-Arab, and anti-Muslim sentiment, and I think some of them are in a position of trying to do catch-up now. We heard journalists saying, Oh well, of course we don't mean that ALL Islamic people are fundamentalists and potentially terrorist. You should have to be very careful about distinguishing Muslim doesn't mean this and Arab doesn't mean that. I have heard a good deal of that in the last few weeks. Unfortunately, that doesn't make up for the years and years of stereotyping that's been done in the wake of the Oklahoma City attack for example. And even that's going on today. Even as journalists are cautioning their readers to make distinctions between terrorism and Islam and Arab-Americans and not confusing those things, they're showing in the background b-roll of people in head scarves, which is standing in as a visual representation of this conversation they're having about terrorism. They're using the images carelessly, particularly television, even as they're cautioning us to be subtle about it. So while I've been happy to see some mainstream journalists cautioning against prejudice and against racism, media have been sloppy, notoriously so for years and years, and a little grain of responsibility isn't going to undo that now. We're already seeing the backlash against Arab-Americans. Against Sikhs who wear turbans, against Muslims, and I'm afraid that some of that has to be laid at the media's feet for all of the years of allowing hateful things on the margins perhaps to be said about Arab-Americans, and about Islamic people. But for allowing a great space of ignorance even in the mainstream about what the realities of Arab life are, about what Islam is really about; they can't make up for that in just a couple weeks.

Who Gets to Speak?

Especially in the first few days after the attack, and then as the administration has developed its response, we as media critics have been looking really carefully at the sources on the news programs; I mean it's something we look at all the time, but it's crucial at a time like this. Who gets to speak? Who gets to come on and give their opinion? And what we found is that, well in the early days we were hearing a lot from . . . when it was really a response to the attack, we

were hearing a lot of rescue workers and from people on the street, just sort of average folks who'd been impacted. And that coverage was poignant and was thoughtful and certainly was gripping as we were just trying to find out anything. As the story transformed into, from a story about the attack to a story about the response, we started to see the parade of old generals again. We started to see the former politicians and the retired military officials and the current military officials. [The question isn't] Should those people be included in the media conversation? but what's the impact of having the conversation about our response (while our response is still being formulated), having that conversation be shaped utterly by military perspectives? Well what that leaves out, of course, is the wide range of people who are regional specialists, who are not just activists but also historians, also advocates, also refugee workers and on and on and on, who believe that we have to spend energy looking for a non-military response, who believe emphatically that if what we want to do is keep something like this terrorist attack from happening again, then it is specifically those non-military, diplomatic human rights responses that we have to look at. That perspective is largely off the screen. You can find it in some print media sometimes, but television has done horribly in presenting the idea that there is anything other than a military response possible here. Once we're at war it's going to be too late. We have to talk about the various options early on, and it is not unpatriotic to do that.

RITU SHARMA

Why is it in the Interests of the U.S. that Women be Involved in the Reconstruction of Afghanistan?

I think this case of Afghanistan was a really stark example of how women in a lot of ways are our early warning system for terrorism. The governments that harbor terrorism are basically the same governments who have an absolutely horrendous record on women's rights in particular and human rights in general. So, ten years ago had the U.S. paid some more attention to what was happening in Afghanistan with the rising fundamentalism there, I think we might have had a clue of what was to come, and we might have been able to take some steps to see that terrorism or those fundamental movements were sort of contained in that area. So, most specifically to what happened on September 11th, it is good U.S. policy to pay attention to women's rights around the world, even for our self-interest.

I think two major goals for the future of Afghanistan. One is that women have to be part of designing the future of Afghanistan. And, if that happens, I'm not really worried about the future of Afghanistan. I think that women are dedicated to peace. Not a single member of the Al-Qaeda network is a woman. Women are not as militaristic; women are not terrorists. So, if women can become part of this peace process, if they can sit at the table as equals with men, then I think the future of Afghanistan is very hopeful. And, secondly, because of what I've just said, women need to be the ones who are receiving a lot of the development assistance and delivering a lot of the assistance because they have a very intimate and key knowledge of what the people of Afghanistan really need.

The thing that people really don't talk about very much is that there is a difference between men and women fundamentally in how we solve problems, in how we resolve conflict in the world. And, again, you see this most starkly in Afghanistan, where women are committed to peace – they want nothing more than to simply be able to have babies and send their children to school and go on with their daily routines in safety and in peace. And, it's really the men of Afghanistan who have been fighting ethnic wars against one another for literally thousands of years. And when you look at it with that historical context, you have to sit back and ask yourself, "Who is going to help us create and build a peaceful Afghanistan? Men or women?" And then I think the choice is very clear. Women are not terrorists; women are mothers – they want their children to be safe, they want to just have peace in Afghanistan.

And, again, that's the message we're trying so hard to get to the White House and to Congress. Whether or not they really care about women's rights is almost irrelevant. Just from a strategic point of view, they should want to be working with the people that have the same goals that they do. So, it does break my heart when I see the table of people that they have put together to talk about the future government of Afghanistan. And these are guys that have been fighting each other, as I've said, for many, many years. And you have to look at that and say, "Are there really people at that table who are truly dedicated to peace?" And I can tell you that if you have a woman sitting at that table, she is; she will be a good friend to the United States.

What is Missing from the Media Discussion?

The mainstream media has been covering these events from a very narrow view of what it is to be patriotic. The mainstream media is really out there saying, "Support the war.

That's patriotic. Support our troops; send aid to the Red Cross and aid to the International Red Cross. That's what it means to be patriotic. And we must support the president." Now whether you disagree with that or not is irrelevant to me. The problem that I have with the mainstream media is that it's not allowing people to express their patriotism and their love for the United States in different ways – to help Afghan women, to ensure that women's rights are protected and restored, to really question the war effort. I mean that's one of the most patriotic things a person can do for the United States is to question our actions, to use their free speech rights to do that, and to really make us all think about, "Is this really how we want to proceed? Is this really what we want to do? What are we creating for ourselves in the future?" So, I think that the mainstream media has only been covering part of the picture of how the U.S. can respond in that region.

I think the voice that is missing from the picture is that Afghan women really want two things: they want choice and representation. They don't want American women saying, "This is what your rights should be: that every Afghan girl should go to school; that you shouldn't wear a burqa; that you should be able to walk down the street wearing whatever you want. That's not really a choice for us to make in the United States. And I think what Afghan women are saying is that they want to be able to decide for themselves what they want to do and how they want to express their religious beliefs and their faith. And that leads directly to the second thing that Afghan women want: they want representation in the government, they want to have a say in how things are going to be done in the future of Afghanistan. And I think it's our role, as American women, to support those two things, and to be really clear that we want the restoration of women's human rights in Afghanistan, not because we want them to dress, and think, and walk, and talk like we do, but we want them to have the choice to be who they are and to pursue their own future in however they want to.

Why is Investment Better than War?

Well, I think the U.S. has experience in doing this kind of military operation around the world and what that has brought us. It doesn't solve any of our problems. We've done essentially the same thing in Iran, in Iraq, in Nicaragua, in El Salvador. And we have managed to create for ourselves these kind of enemies – people who resent and intensely dislike the United States because of what we've done in their countries or how we've supported really authoritarian leaders without any questions or we've given them money without any strings attached, which they then use to oppress the people of their countries. So, it's no wonder that people in Saudi Arabia, in Egypt, in Afghanistan have a significant amount of resentment against the U.S. government. So, it's clear that this system that we're using is not very effective. What will be more effective is addressing the underlying development and poverty issues. And, again, if women are part of the process of leading their own country and making new laws, educating children, delivering health care services, we're going to see a lot more stability and peace and economic growth and development in that part of the world. The facts prove that out. The United Nations has done study after study. The World Bank has done studies to show that when you invest in girls' education and health care, countries can boost their economic growth rates by up to three percent.

What Can People Do to Make Sure Women's Issues are not Left Off the Agenda?

I think it has just burst the dam of people's interest, and the water is now rushing through. And people knew about what was happening with women in Afghanistan – they had heard about it, it was in the back of their mind – and now when you see it on CNN every day, a lot of folks are wondering, “What can I do? How can I help?” A woman sitting in Iowa at her kitchen table, watching CNN, she thinks, “Okay, I've given some money to the Red Cross. What can I do for Afghan women?” And, I think, in an ironic way, it has been a wonderful gift to the women of Afghanistan and to American women to realize that we're not that far apart from one another, and we really have to look out for each other. And we have had just a huge outpouring of interest from American women all around the country and U.S. women's organizations calling us, saying, “What can we do? What can we do?”

Well, we've got a number of activist groups around the country. We've got one in Los Angeles, one in Atlanta, one in Chicago, and they're all doing different things; everyone is expressing their desire to help in a different way. In Chicago, they're bringing together a meeting with a hostess speaker and will invite people from the community to hear about what is happening with women in Afghanistan, and then they'll sign a petition, sign letters to their representatives and members of Congress on supporting the Access for Afghan Women Act. Other folks will have phone trees, where they'll call ten friends and then they'll call ten friends and will get the word out [that way]. Other people will use the Internet, as a lot of us activists do, to just blast the message out all over the place, so we get a huge outpouring of interest in helping Afghan women. And we want to send a really strong single [message] to the White House and to Congress that, “Now is the time. This is it. We have to step up to the plate and make sure that women's rights and women themselves are integrated into the peace process.” Now if we miss this opportunity, that's it. It'll be too hard to try to backtrack and recreate a new government in Afghanistan. It's hard enough to do it once.

Well, I think when we hear these gut-wrenching stories of what's happening to women in Afghanistan – women giving birth on the road as they're fleeing their country, women who are stoned to death because they dared to walk on the street without a male relative right next to them – it really hits us. And what we need to remember is that these Afghanistan women are not very alone. Even in the countries that neighbor Afghanistan – Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan – women are also suffering really grave violations of their basic human rights. So, that when we work on restoring women's human rights in Afghanistan, we have to understand that our efforts are going to have a much broader impact than just in Afghanistan. Because if we stand up in one country and say, “No. This is not acceptable. Women have the same rights as men and all people have basic human rights,” that sends a message to the rest of the countries in the world that we don't want countries in our global community who don't have fundamental respect for human rights. And I think that Afghanistan being such a stark example – it is living hell – has really opened people's eyes in general to what it must be like to live in different places of the world. If you open your mind to what it must be like to live in Afghanistan, then you also begin to think about what it's really like to live in Sierra Leone, what is it really like right now to live in El Salvador. So, I think it has been a wonderful thing to see the minds of American people open up in this way.

What Can People Do to Pressure the Government to Make Sure Women are Represented in Afghanistan?

There are a lot of things people can do to make the White House listen to their point of

view on this. I mean, just literally pick up the phone and call the White House, pick up the phone and call your member of Congress and say, “Hey, women’s rights are critical. Our mission in Afghanistan isn’t successful until women’s human rights are restored and women are part of rebuilding that country.” And that’s one of the reasons why we’re doing the Access for Afghan Women Act. Unlike a lot of the other resolutions that have been done on Afghanistan – they’re really helpful, but they simply make a statement, they don’t actually require the U.S. government to actually do anything – and that’s why we’re proposing this bill and introducing it because if it’s passed, it will require the United States, by law, to integrate women’s issues, work toward the restoration of women’s human’s rights. Then it’s not a choice; they have to do it. And again, we are pushing and working with the White House to get them to do it without us having to go to that extreme, but we’re prepared to do that. And I think American women and American men around this country would heed a call to action if we said, “It’s not happening. We need you to speak out and support this legislation and make our leaders do what we know is the right thing to do.”

So we are working with a number of offices on the Hill, people who’ve been leaders on international women’s issues for a long time – Connie Morella from Maryland, Carolyn Maloney from New York, the United Nations is in her district, so she cares really deeply about these issues, John Kerry from Massachusetts, John McCain from Arizona, and Chris Dodd as well. So we’re really excited to have this group of legislators working with us. And this week, we actually introduced two bills. One is a Congressional resolution which calls on the White House and the State Department to ensure that women are part of the peace process and part of the process of bringing together a new government in Afghanistan, as well as being really integrated into all of the development and reconstruction efforts. The second piece of legislation that we are introducing is called the Access for Afghan Women Act. And this bill would actually require the U.S. government, the State Department, the Agency for International Development, or any of the U.N. programs that are funded by the U.S. Government to integrate women into four major areas. The first is refugee and relief assistance – we want to make sure that the aid is actually getting to women and girls. We want to make sure that women are part of the peace process, and, again, the negotiations over the new government of Afghanistan. And that women are receiving a substantial portion of the development aid money that the U.S. sends over to Afghanistan. And finally that women’s needs and rights are integrated into the peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan. So we try to cover all our bases.

HOWARD ZINN

Resentment of American Policy in the Middle East

The Bush administration, and not only the Bush administration but [also] many people in national politics, the media, have said that this is an attack on democracy and liberty, and that doesn't make sense to me. That is, it's possible to understand the motives of the people who did that terrible thing on September 11th, but it's hard to imagine [that] what they were most concerned with was democracy and liberty. It seems very clear that what people in the Middle East generally are most infuriated about with American policy is not democracy, not liberty in fact, I would guess that there are many, many people in the Middle East who would like more democracy and more liberty. They live under oppressive governments. But what they are very angry about is United States policy in the Middle East. I suppose you can point to three policies that the United States has been following, all of which arouse enormous anger.

The first, obviously, is American support for Israel and for Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza for the billions of dollars the United States gives to Israel each year, military weapons, you know, air crafts, tanks. And then this is used against the Palestinians who want self-determination. And so this continued support of the United States for Israel has been really infuriating to so many people in the Middle East.

The second thing I think that they are very angry about is the embargo against Iraq. And the people in the Middle East understand that the embargo against Iraq has cost, according to the United Nations, perhaps a million lives since the end of the Gulf War, with perhaps a half a million children dying as a result. And this is simply intolerable; after all, these are [their] neighbors and these are fellow Muslims.

And the third thing that they are concerned about and angry about, and this is particularly true of bin Laden . . . And we don't know if bin Laden is really behind these attacks. Perhaps he is, perhaps he isn't; certainly the American government has not brought forth the evidence to show that he is, but it's very common not only for the United States government [but] for any kind of police institution to fasten upon one figure, and the United States has done this many times. You know, in the case of the war against Panama, [the U.S.] focused on Noriega, as if we [had] only captured Noriega, everything would [have been] solved. And then with Iraq, [the U.S.] fastened on Saddam Hussein. And now it's bin Laden. But whether bin Laden is involved in this or not, certainly bin Laden has great grievances against the United States, and the most serious one is [that] the United States, at the end of the Gulf War, stationed troops in Saudi Arabia and has kept them there ever since. We have, the United States has, about 7,000 troops stationed in Saudi Arabia, and Saudi Arabia is the site of the most holy places in Islam, including Mecca. And in fact bin Laden has specifically talked about this and has asked the United States to withdraw its troops and of course has received no response. So not only bin Laden but any Saudi Arabian nationalist would be angry at the stationing of American troops in Saudi Arabia.

And it's very interesting, when people talk about it and some people do, even people on the Left do they say, Well it's a religious thing; it's a fundamentalist thing. You shouldn't focus on American foreign policy; [rather] you should focus on the difference between the Islamic fundamentalism and the Judeo-Christian tradition in the West and the secular tradition in the West. Of course, Israel is not a secular state and the United States only pretends to be a secular state. But they talk about it this issue of religion as being the driving force for terrorism.

But in the case of Osama bin Laden, it's very clear: you can point to the exact moment in history when Osama bin Laden turned from being an ally of the United States, which he was during the Afghan civil war, to being an enemy of the United States. Now [when] he was an ally of the United States, he was still a fundamentalist. The relations didn't change, but he was an ally of the United States, and he did not let the difference in religion stand in the way of his support, you know, of the American campaign in Afghanistan. And so you can identify the moment in which he changed, and that was the moment when the United States, at the end of the Gulf War, did not withdraw troops from Saudi Arabia.

So there are three very, very crucial policies which have angered huge numbers of people throughout the Muslim world. And when you anger millions and millions of people, there's bound to be a very tiny number of them who will turn to fanatic acts to terrorism. And I think that's what happened in this case.

Patriotism and Hysteria

One of the most dangerous things that has happened since September 11th has been the cry for unity of Democrats and Republicans, and suddenly the Democratic differences with Republicans, which were very small to begin with, have disappeared. And the Democrats fall in line completely like an absolute bunch of sheep following the shepherd, you see. And suddenly Bush has become the shepherd, not only to the Republican Party but [also] the Democratic Party. And just the other day, Al Gore who ran against Bush, who got more popular votes than Bush, and probably rightfully should be president of the United States Al Gore said, George Bush is my Commander in Chief. Well, he hasn't read the United States Constitution very well because in the United States Constitution, the president is not the Commander in Chief of the American people; he is the Commander in Chief of the armed forces. Al Gore is not a member of the armed forces and to put it all in military terms like that is very frightening.

And all these displays of flags . . . Now the flag is an ambiguous symbol. The flag can mean something noble it can mean the principles of democracy or liberty and when the flag means that, fine, it's good to wave flags. But when flags are waved in response to a call for war, then the flag becomes a symbol of militarism and war. And this display of flags everywhere in the country, it creates an atmosphere of semi-hysteria in which storekeepers look around and see [that] other stores on the street have put out flags, and the storekeeper is afraid not to put out a flag. People living on the street see [that] their neighbors have put out American flags. And they say, Well, I had better put out an American flag or people will point to me and say, you're not patriotic.

This kind of hysteria is something that goes way back historically. The very first crisis that the United States was in was right after the American Revolution in the 1790s when there was a lot of tension between the United States and Revolutionary France. At that point, Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Acts. The Alien and Sedition Acts made it a crime to criticize the government and gave the president the power to deport aliens [and] non-citizens, without trial, without any kind of pretense of due process. And that was the first historical incidence of hysterical reaction to a war, at that time, you might say a cold war situation. Then we've had that happen again and again throughout our wars and just to bring it up to the twentieth century, in World War I, the Congress again passed laws the Espionage Act, the Sedition Act. And the Espionage Act had very little to do with espionage; it had to do with people speaking out against the war. And the result of it was that about one thousand Americans were sent to prison for

speaking out against American entrance into the war. And there, too, a great atmosphere of fear was created. People were afraid if they spoke out against the war, they'd go to prison. And that hysteria continued after the war, right after the war, when the Attorney General of the United States used the occasion of a bomb that had been placed, and to this day no one knows [by whom]. But that word became the reason for rounding up thousands of people in the United States who are not citizens and putting them on boats and deporting them without any trial, without any pretense of due process. So we've seen that before.

In WWII, the Smith Act was passed and people were sent to prison for speaking out against the war. And then we have the experiences of all of the times since WWII that the United States has been engaged in wars the Korean War, the Vietnam War, . . . and throughout those years there has been a fear of dissenting, of speaking out. Of course, people talk about it as the McCarthy period in the 1950s, but, actually, McCarthyism is a phenomenon that, as the suppression of free speech, goes before McCarthy himself and exists even after McCarthy is dead. And now we see another example of it today. And it is, therefore, the responsibility of Americans who want to hold on to the American principle of dissent and free speech; it is the responsibility of Americans to speak their minds honestly, even if it goes against majority opinion, even if it goes against what the government is saying.

The news media have been terrible in conforming, I mean they have American flags which they show constantly on CNN television. You turn on CNN television and there's an American flag in the corner of the screen, constantly. And other channels have done the same thing. And one of the most important newscasters, anchorman Dan Rather, said on national television, President Bush, he's my president. When he says get in line, I get in line. Now this is not the statement of a journalist in a democracy, this is the statement of a journalist in a totalitarian state. And you expect that in totalitarian states, where everybody falls in line and nobody questions the president, but here in the United States pretending to be a democratic state this really is a sign that we are losing our democracy.

How Do We Combat Terrorism ?

People are always asking, What can we do about terrorism? And there's a tendency to look for a quick fix: What can we do *immediately* against terrorism? And the truth is, there's not much you can do immediately against terrorism. That is, you can have stronger security at airports and airplanes, but ultimately, terrorists cannot be prevented from carrying out their acts by more security measures. I mean, Israel has the tightest security measures of any country in the world, but still there are car-bombings that take place. So, sure, people want a quick fix, they want to [do something quickly] about Osama bin Laden or whoever it was. But the truth is, even if you apprehended Osama bin Laden, even if he was the culprit, even if you apprehended him, terrorism would continue. After all, if there were nineteen hijackers, there must be hundreds more in the pool from which they came and thousands and tens of thousands more from which that pool was created.

So, there's no real short-term solution, and that is what is very hard to face: that the only solution to terrorism is in dealing with the fundamentals of American foreign policy, changing American foreign policy, turning the United States from being a military superpower to being a moral superpower. The United States would need to do such drastic things that the major political leaders would not want to do this. And the reason they quickly turn to war they do not want the American people to think about changes in foreign policy. If they engage in military

action, they can turn people's attention from studying what the United States has done in the world. But if the president were to immediately say, We will withdraw our troops from other countries in the world. We have nineteen major military bases all over the world, [and] we will dismantle those bases, we will pull back our navy from being on every ocean and every sea. In other words, we will move all sources of provocation in the world, and we will use our immense wealth to distribute food and medicine, help people, and do something about tuberculosis and AIDS and hungry people, now that would be a revolutionary change in American foreign policy. And of course our government has no desire to do anything like that, and that's why they turned to war: because they feel they have to show they're doing something and they don't want to do the one thing that will work; they would rather do things that won't work.

Oil and Foreign Policy

Well I don't think it's hard to figure out why the United States carries out the policies that it does in the Middle East. You can answer that question with one word: oil. The United States, ever since WWII, made the decision that it was going to be the major power controlling the oil resources of the Middle East. Before WWII, England and France were the major powers in the Middle East. The Middle East has been a colonial territory back to the 19th century. But with WWII, the old colonial powers, England and France, were severely weakened, and the United States emerged as the leading power in the world. And in the middle of WWII, Franklin D. Roosevelt, the president, met with King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia and made arrangements for United States corporations to become a force in Saudi Arabia. And you can trace everything that the United States has done in the Middle East to the concern for oil. In their candid moments, members of the United States government will affirm that it is oil that they care about. And in their more candid moments, commentators who normally support American policy will admit that it is oil.

I remember that just before the Gulf War, *The New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman who is not really a critic of American foreign policy but just before the Gulf War, there was an article in *The New York Times* in which Thomas Friedman said, You know the reason we are going to war in the Gulf is [because of] the price of gasoline in the filling stations. That after all, [we are] not even going to war because we need to have the oil ourselves, you see, control the oil ourselves. The countries in the Middle East have to sell that oil. They can't hold onto it. It's just that they want to sell it at their price, and we don't want to buy it at their price. We want to buy it at our price. And that's why the United States prices for gasoline are about one fourth of what they are in Europe. And so if you look at, as I say, the various American policies helping Israel [and] at the same time giving military aid to the Arab states the United States has followed this policy of keeping a very close relationship with Israel on the one hand, and with the oil producing states on the other. And playing them off against one another so that the United States can be the dominating force in the Middle East.

After all, the war that took place in 1991 against Saddam Hussein was really based not on the liberation of Kuwait, although Kuwait itself represented oil, but there could have been an accommodation of Saddam Hussein. There could have been a way of preventing that war, saving hundreds of thousands of lives. If the United States had been willing to make certain oil concessions to Saddam Hussein which had to do with the price of oil, and the United States was not willing to do that. And you can, I think, feel confident that whatever the United States does in the Middle East, it has to do with the control of oil.

War and Deception

If you look at the history of wars, they start with deception. Deception is required because if you told the people the truth, they would not accept the war. You can take the history back, oh you can go back to the Mexican War of 1846-1848 when the United States fought a very short war against Mexico and, of course, won the war and took half of Mexico. And that war started with a lie, started with a deception, started with President Polk telling the nation, American blood has been shed on American soil. No, it was a lie, because it was not American soil. There was a clash between Mexican soldiers and American soldiers on the border, which was a disputed border, nobody knew whose land it was. Mexico claimed it, the United States claimed it. But it was a war that was instigated by the United States. The United States wanted a war with Mexico. President Polk, in his diary, before the war started, had said he would welcome a war with Mexico because he wanted California. Mexico controlled California, owned California as a part of Mexico. After all, why do you have all those names out in California? Santa Anna and Santa Rosa and Santa this and San Juan and so on. So, the United States wanted that lovely territory out there in the southwest and so the deception was needed to plunge the country into war.

And then, you know, just coming up to the turn of the century, if you look at the war that the United States fought against Spain over Cuba, the Spanish American War, it starts with Battleship Maine blowing up in Havana Harbor. Now, nobody actually knew who blew up the battleship and common sense would tell you that the Spanish would not want to blow up the battleship because they would know that it would bring the United States into war but the United States blamed it on Spain and immediately roused the country into patriotic fervor, and immediately the United States was at war, again a very short war, and it enabled the United States to not only drive Spain out of Cuba but [also] to become the dominant power in Cuba. And then to go across the Pacific to the Philippines, another Spanish possession, and take the Philippines. Of course, the Filipinos resisted. The Filipinos had an independence movement. And that required another war. And that war also started with a deception where the United States claimed that Filipino troops had fired on American troops, and now we had to be at war. But that's not exactly what happened. And so it goes on and on. . .

In WWI, a claim was about the Germans sinking an unarmed ship, a passenger ship, the *Lucitania*, and many Americans died. Well it turned out later that the *Lucitania* was carrying ammunition. It was not simply a passenger ship; it was a war ship. And probably the deception that stands out most clearly in the minds of Americans who still remember the Vietnam era was that the Vietnam War started again with a deception. It started with the Gulf of Tonkin and the president announcing that our destroyers had been fired upon in the Gulf of Tonkin, and our destroyers had been there on harmless missions, you know, and this was an unprovoked attack. Well the statement was full of lies, but immediately Congress passed almost unanimously, unanimously in the House of Representatives, and almost unanimously in the Senate, very much like the recent resolutions passed to support Bush giving the president blank check, at that time giving Lyndon Johnson a blank check to do whatever he wanted, the result being ten years of brutal war. And so, yes, I mean you can carry it down to such small wars like the war in Grenada, the invasion of Grenada, some lies [were] told about how American medical students were in danger when they were not in danger. The war against Panama starting with stories about well, we've been insulted, some American sergeant and his wife were insulted by Panamanian

troops, and so on.

And it's a long, long list of lies. There's a great American journalist, I.F. Stone, who would be invited to journalism classes. He left the major newspapers he had worked for and started his own little independent newsletter, which became famous *I.F. Stone's Weekly*. And he would talk to journalism students, and he would tell these young people who wanted to be reporters, If you want to be a good journalist, just remember two words: governments lie. Not just the American government, all governments. Governments lie. Well, if our newspaper people, if our media, would start with that supposition, then we would have some really democratic discussion, really full exchange of ideas, instead of this rush to conform with whatever the president says.

Unraveling Deception

The deception that we see at the beginning of wars, after a while, begins to be exposed. And we saw this most clearly in the case of Vietnam, where it took several years for the American public to begin to see the truth about what was happening in Vietnam. At first they believed the government when it said, Oh we are only bombing military targets. But then as they learned more and more about what was happening in Vietnam, as Vietnam veterans came back from Vietnam and told stories about atrocities that they had been involved in, the public learned. There were teach-ins, there were alternative newspapers, there was an alternative media service out in the Pacific it was that service that broke the story of the Mai Lai Massacre, not the major newspapers. And so the lies began to unravel little by little, and after a few years the American public turned totally around. In 1966, there [was] probably two thirds of the public in favor of the war, but by 1968, -69, two thirds of the public [was] against the war. So I guess I'm suggesting that if there can be a campaign of information, if there can be a widespread dissemination of information and ideas to expose the deceptions, to expose the lies, to tell the truth about what's going on, then the public, which initially is deceived and initially rushes to support the president, may turn around.

Even in the Gulf War, in the Gulf War there was not time as in the [case of] Vietnam, which lasted for years, there were several years of time for the American people to learn what was going on. In the Gulf War, there was no time. It was a three-month war. But even so, when they took polls after the Gulf War, six months after, nine months after, the eighty percent or eighty-five percent that had supported the war at the beginning of the war had now dwindled to forty-five percent, fifty percent. So people do learn, and the hope is that people will not be afraid to speak up. That information will be disseminated, that meetings, rallies, teach-ins will take place□ That the Internet will spread information all over the country. And that as a result of learning about what is really happening in the world and learning the truth about American foreign policy and thinking about terrorism in a serious way, and not in a superficial way, as a result of that, well, we might see a public that begins to demand changes in the American posture in the world.

ROBERT JENSEN

War, Journalism & Democracy

In a time of war – when you need a critical, independent journalism in a democracy the most – and, I think, if we look at the history of especially post-WW II American conflicts, it's at time of wars that the American journalism industry and community has failed us most, and I think it's particularly important this time. The questions you would ask of journalism during wartime are not unlike [those] you would ask at anytime when you want a functioning democracy – that is a democracy where citizens actually have meaningful input into the formation of policy, not simply ratifying policies made by elite. So what do you need from journalists? Well, you need basically three things. You need an independent flow of information that you can trust, that has some accuracy, something other than simply government information. You need historical and political context into which to put that information, because random facts mean nothing to most people without some framework. And, finally, you need the widest range of opinion that's circulating in the culture, so that people have, in a sense, something to rub up against, somewhere to test their own ideas. And on all three of things I think the American media has failed and, I think, failed miserably this time around.

I would probably make a distinction between television coverage and the newspaper coverage. The newspaper coverage, as it often is, is somewhat more subtle, nuanced, certainly deeper and richer, but still framed in many of the same ways. The television coverage, I have to say, has been not just bad, [but also] I think the television journalists have been unethical. I think the way in which the television journalists have abandoned any sense of neutrality. . . Of course, the idea that journalists are ever neutral and objective is complicated, and one can argue about that, but here we have journalists who pretend to be neutral and objective journalists, who go on national television and say things, as Dan Rather did on the David Letterman show, "Wherever the President wants me, I'm there. I'll line up where I'm told to be." Cokie Roberts, a well-known NPR correspondent, and now ABC commentator, said again on a talk show, "I'm so impressed with the military people." She made a joke about how many medals they have on their uniforms, and she can't even pick them. And so she said, "When they tell me things, I tend to believe it." So on television you have journalists essentially saying, "We have given up. We have abandoned our role as independent gatherers of information; we are simply conduits for government information." And I see that playing out all over the place.

So on the first point – that we need this independent source of information – I think the journalists themselves are almost admitting that they are not providing that. I've seen amazing things. I've seen Tom Brokaw, or Dan Rather – they seem to blend together after a while, these anchors – say that there were conflicting claims from the Taliban about civilian casualties and then from the U.S. military. And he said that of course we have no way to adjudicate this, we don't know, but he said we have no reason to disbelieve the military. Well if you look at the last fifty-six years of American history, after WWII, there is every reason to disbelieve the U.S. military. They have lied to the American public and to American journalists over and over again. So at the very least, the kind of bottom-line skepticism in information collection that you want from journalists, many of them have abandoned, and not only abandoned, but abandoned explicitly. So on that first count, I think the journalists have a lot to answer for.

On the second one – the historical and political context – again I think the failure is quite profound. I must say it's a little better than it was during the Gulf War in 1991, where I

think it was an utter and total failure. They're at least asking the *Why do they hate us?* question: "In the politics and history of these regions, of the Middle East and Central Asia, where does this antipathy towards the United States come from?" The problem is the answers they are giving, I think, are terribly superficial, again reflecting a sort of ideological commitment to the American government, and to the American mythology about our role in the world – what I often just call American Exceptionalism – this notion that America, by definition, does good in the world. So, whatever bad might happen because of American policy must be an accident, a miscalculation. So the historical and political context, I think, has been missing also. And to say this of course doesn't mean they never take up these questions. There have been some notable exceptions to this. I've seen Arab and Muslim commentators for instance being allowed to talk. But again, here the importance is the pattern. It's not just, "Is there occasionally a dissident voice allowed in?" but "What is the sort of drumbeat over and over again?" And, of course, that framing of the historical and political context allows those alternative points of views very rarely.

On the final point – the need for the U.S. media to provide the widest range of opinion available in the culture, so people can test out their own opinions – I think here the failure is most profound. If you look at the people who really provide the analysis, they're taking the facts and framing them for us. Who are those expert commentators? – especially on television. Well, they're former generals; they're retired military officers. These people are actually now on the payroll of these networks. So they are not even being brought in as outside commentators; they are simply staff of the networks who are framing everything we see. Ex-Intelligence officials, the former director of the CIA. Or my favorite category of Terrorism Expert, which I still have no idea what constitutes one as a Terrorism Expert. I've often thought that if you simply print up business cards that say Terrorism Expert, you'd become one. And I think several people have pointed out, probably the most ironic, if not sickening one of these, is Henry Kissinger – former Secretary of State, former National Security Advisor, someone who is at the core of some of the most atrocious American military and covert operations around the world – is being brought on over and over again and being relied on as someone who can frame the question of *Why do they hate us?*

Well, one of the answers in the Middle East to *Why do they hate us?* is [that] the policies of Henry Kissinger in the Nixon and Ford administration are central to why they hate us. So you are bringing in the very people who I would argue are at the core of the problem. Now it doesn't mean that Henry Kissinger's voice should never be heard; it means where are the people to balance that? Where is that diverse range of opinion? Well it's not on the networks for the most part. And those of us who have actually been on. For instance, I was on The O'Reilly Factor, for all of six minutes – five minutes of it was Bill O'Reilly shouting over me. To occasionally put on an alternative perspective, a dissident voice, and then claim you have done your job is, of course, ridiculous. That it is again the patterns of coverage we have to see, the patterns of opinion being offered, the patterns of analysis that are given to us as the way to think. And it's important to realize that people are getting other sources of information, increasingly with the Internet. But again, the American television networks provide the dominant flow of information to this culture. The vast majority of people are not reading newspapers in depth; they're not spending three hours a day on the web. It would be hard to imagine that, given how busy people's lives are. If you're working two jobs trying to raise a family, trying to make ends meet, the idea that you're going to in depth go for that information isn't really very feasible.

So, again, we have to look at what are these patterns of coverage in the dominant media, and that's why I think again the television journalists, especially, have a lot to answer for. And I believe their conduct is in fact not only unprofessional, [but] I believe it's unethical; if in fact in a modern democracy their claim to special status, their claim to having a place – a protected place under the first amendment – depends on their ability to work that magic in a sense that a democracy needs. Which is not only an informed public, but a public that is active and engaged. And the way in which this news is presented and the way in which the American news media engages the audience, I think in fact does just the opposite – it produces a passive, uninformed public.

Where to go for alternative coverage

One of the ways in which both American journalists and sometimes the American public respond to critique of the coverage is to say, “Well, we're not ideological. We're just Americans; we work off of common sense. We're not like those Europeans where we come with all these ideological baggage. We are just straightforward, common sense Americans.” Well one of the ways you can test that is to say, “Well what is the foreign press doing? How is the coverage different or similar?” And with the Internet now we can go online and see the coverage literally all of over the world. Even in countries in which the primary media are not in English. I have been reading things out of India – there is an English language paper in Pakistan on the web. There is the British Press; there is all of European press, some of which is in translation. So you don't even have to be multilingual. The magic of the net and the dominance of English now means that anybody can go and test it.

Is the American media in fact non-ideological? Well what you find is significant differences in the coverage. Take an example: Mary Robinson – the U.N. commissioner for human rights, a very important international official, very well respected – has a long history of superb diplomatic efforts. Well she came out and suggested the United States should halt the bombing of Afghanistan strictly on humanitarian grounds, because of the deepening humanitarian crisis. That story was widely reported all over the world. It was, in some places, front-page news around the world. In the United States, a friend ran a search and found five newspapers that carried any significant mention of that. That means the American public isn't getting that kind of information; well, why aren't they?

I think if you look at the patterns of coverage across the board, you will see, for instance, much deeper coverage of the humanitarian crisis in the foreign press. They understand that when you have 7.5 million Afghans who are, in the professional language, without food security, which means they could starve this coming winter. That is a humanitarian crisis that some people are saying reaches potentially genocidal levels. If the American bombing campaign is preventing the distribution of food at the level that's required to keep those people alive, that means the United States policy is directly implicated in a potentially genocidal humanitarian crisis. That is a big story. It's mentioned in the U.S. press, but it's mentioned at a very low level. It might be in the story somewhere about the bombing campaign. It might be mentioned in the story about the so-called humanitarian food drops. There might be a quotation somewhere down in that story about the U.S. food drops that says, “Actually, food drops are the worst way to distribute food; they're the most dangerous, they're the least reliable.” So you get these little nuggets of information here and there, and if you're a critical reader, you can put that together and start to understand it. But if you compare it to the foreign press, you see the coverage is very

different.

American journalists are first and foremost Americans, which means they operate in that same ideological system as the American leadership, and, to a large degree, the American public. And how do you break out of that is the question. I think reading the foreign press is one good way. There are now, of course, a number of alternative media sites in the U.S., both on the web and in print. Z-Mag.org, Comondreams.org, Counterpunch.org – everybody has their list of favorites that they've come to trust. *The Guardian* newspaper in England is doing very good critical reporting, *The Independent* in London, which has one of the best Middle East correspondents around – Robert Fisk – from a western country. And of course the press in that region itself. Now many of the newspapers in the Arab world are not entirely free, but these are places you can go for information.

I think probably the most telling anecdote from this last month is the way in which Al-Jazeera, the independent 24-hour news channel of Qatar, which is, some people will tell you, the only really free media in the Arab world to some degree. The way it's been treated. It's been doing phenomenal reporting. It has reporters on the ground in Afghanistan, all through the Middle East. It's built up a reputation for straight-forward reporting in the Arab and Muslim worlds, and it's being denigrated by American officials; it's being denigrated by American media. It's almost as if you can't trust them because they are producing news that doesn't look exactly like CNN. They are called the Arab CNN, but of course there is a very distinct difference between CNN and Al-Jazeera. And why is it that the one voice that prior to September 11th was being taunted as the really cutting edge of journalism in the Arab world is all of a sudden being demonized? I think that tells you something about the ideological system we live in.

MICHAEL ALBERT

The Bombing and the Humanitarian Crisis

What's going on in Afghanistan is piling catastrophe on top of calamity. U.S. policy abstracting from the complications has a very simple effect: it aggravates a longstanding plight of the Afghan people – hunger. It aggravates it in a way that is catastrophic; that is to say if there is not outside food for Afghan's people, they starve. The closing of borders, the bombing, the policies of the United States are pronounced by the U.N. agencies, the various aid agencies – Doctors Without Borders, the Red Cross, all of them – they all say essentially the same thing: in so many words, about seven and a half million people are at risk, easily a million, more than a million, could starve to death as a result of these policies – “Please stop.” They beg us to stop.

So independently of some of the more detailed attributes – so, for instance, we violate international law by what we are doing. In fact, we do it partly *to* violate international law so that we don't legitimate international law and thereby create a context in which people could come to the United States and say, “What do you do in Nicaragua? What are you doing in Iraq? What are you doing in Columbia? What do you do here, there, and the other place is terrorism, and you are culpable, and you should be brought before international law.” We violate international law rather than legitimating it precisely because we don't want to establish that as a norm, as a principle. So that's bad. We are doing something which literally produces rather than reduces; rather than reducing, it increases the probability of people being hateful, desperate enough, alienated enough, and angry enough to engage in terrorism against the United States. So we don't reduce the prospects of terrorism in the United States by what we are doing; we are increasing it. We are creating more reason for people to feel that way not less. So that's another problem.

The real overriding, dominating point is that a million to seven million lives are at stake, and the United States is engaging in a policy and the American intelligencia – the people who are at CBS and NBC, the people who are in universities – the people who have access to information are all in a position to know, and some of them necessarily know because they are getting the reports on their desks that this is the case, that our policies could kill a million to seven million people and they are all feeling okay. If you think about that and what that says about our culture and our attitudes and our values and the way we judge human life, I mean this is a holocaust, this is a potential holocaust. If it doesn't happen, that's great, we should celebrate, but the fact to realize right now is that people are okay with it happening. So if it *doesn't* happen, we can celebrate, but that wouldn't negate the fact that on September 15th, they were ready to have it happen; that tells us something about it.

It is rather like Madeline Albright saying in response to the question, “What do you think of a half million Iraqi children out of a million or a million and a quarter Iraqis dying due to the U.S. embargo, what do you think about that?” And she says, “Well, I think it's worth it.” It's worth it for what? To maintain our credibility? To delegitimize international law? To pursue policies that benefit elites in the United States and around the world, it's worth it to kill half a million people? Well, that is terrorism. It's worth it to kill half a million innocent children, or a million and a quarter innocent Iraqis in order to pursue policies that we like. That is the exact same mentality as if bin Laden did it. Which we don't know, but if bin Laden did it, it is worth it to kill five thousand or let's say it killed forty thousand, which might have been certainly a possibility, right? Five thousand or forty thousand people in order to pursue policies that bin

Laden liked, you know, to topple Saudi Arabia's government or whatever it is. It is despicable because it is terrorism, because it's discounting human life and is using them as chess pieces or Tiddly Winks in the process of pursuing one's goal. And that is what we do to the people of Iraq, and that is what we are doing right now to the people of Afghanistan. So the humanitarian problem is very simple; it's more corpses due to our policies and whether or not we as responsible caring human beings are going to raise our voices about it.

What should Americans with Conscience Do?

Why does anything that we do matter at all? Most people think it doesn't, which is part of why they don't do anything because it seems like it's rolling rocks up a hill; it's futile. And I can understand that; I mean if it is futile, why should you bother? You know go to the beach; it doesn't make any sense to do something that's futile. So why does what we do matter? What we do matters because U.S. policy is not masochistic or sadistic – that is to say they are not killing, they are not engaging in the starvation policy, and if a million corpses arise, they won't have done it because they wanted to see a million corpses. They are not sadists. They are doing it because they want to fulfill certain short aims, like delegitimizing international law and maintaining credibility in pursuing a war on terrorism, but there are bigger aims behind those. Those are means to a still bigger aim – to maintain the conditions of power and privilege and profit that they benefit from.

So what is it that can cause them to change their second order behavior, their behavior in this war? It's going to be something that threatens their higher order priorities. So, in other words, if we can do something that says to the administration, "If you keep on with this policy, if you keep on with this behavior – and this is true whether we are talking about globalization or whether we are talking about...it doesn't matter what we are talking about – if you keep on with the policy that we are opposing, the result will be the emergence of opposition and movements that will grow and grow and grow, and you will create a condition that is worse than what you are pursuing, that is more costly to you, that is more harmful to you than what you are pursuing by policy. So at that point it is your own self-interest; in other words, you have to change, you have to take account." So the factor that we are – we being the American people – dissenting from the policy; the potential factor that we are is a threat to what they hold dear. And the threat is that we would become conscious, that we would become aware, that we would become aroused and angry, that we will dissent, that we will form organizations.

So what do we do? Well, we do those things, we raise peoples' consciousness, we get the truth out. We don't just get the facts of the truth out, we get the understanding of what these facts mean. We get the moral understanding of what's at stake. We arouse peoples' true selves to feel honest human sentiments about this possible pile of corpses at our hands, and so we get dissent. What happens with that is that dissent says to the government, "Wait, our policies are having an effect and the effect is adverse. The effect is instead of what we wanted – to diminish civil liberties, now we've got the problem of growing movements, which is exactly why we wanted the civil liberties diminished; we wanted to have smaller movements, but we are actually generating bigger movements. We wanted to be able to go and get all this military budget stuff through, we wanted to be able to get these tax laws through, but wait a minute, we are creating movements that are so big and that are so obviously going to diversify into those other areas that we are making it harder to get for ourselves what we want, and therefore we don't like this policy." And so people start to peel away from the policy. And overtime the dissent raises

social cost that causes the policy to be reversed.

Is it a hard job? Yes, and a lot is at stake, and we don't have much time, at least for the short run impact on the Afghan people. But it's what we have to do; it's what the situation really is. And lucky for us, their view of us is much more astute than our view of us. That is to say, they see the trajectory of our activity as much more dangerous than we do. You can go back and look at the discussions of Seattle and of globalization just to see that. You can see how their image of us was much, much more powerful; in other words, their view of us was much more powerful, it was much more concerned than our view of ourselves would have suggested to us they should be. And the reason is because they understand that the whole thing is fragile, that once the genie is out of the bottle, once movements get past a certain point, there is no stopping them. So they're very concerned with any process that generates movements beginning to move toward that point, beginning to move toward that level of organization and commitment and knowledge that can no longer be reversed, and so they are very worried about that. That's why we have the capacity, even maybe in the next three months, as hard as it is to believe, to generate enough so that they could be worried.

Has 9/11 Changed the Nature of Progressive Politics?

There is something about September 11th that is quite unique, but it isn't that a lot of civilians died. It may well be that September 11th was, outside of war, the single largest casualty toll from an act of violence in a political violence, in a brief period, but it is not the largest. I mean, regrettably, it is not the largest toll of innocent people to die from terrorist violence by a huge margin. So in Iraq, orders of magnitude, Iraq has had the equivalent of a September 11th nightmare every month for fifteen years, you know that comes to roughly the same total. So that's not what's new. What's new is, as Chomsky points out, is that the guns were pointed in a different direction. That it was despicable is true, but the only thing that is new is that it was the have-not countries – or at least some manifestation of the pain and the suffering they feel and the machinations that go on inside and that remit from that – manifesting itself not in their countries, which is rather typical, but in the motherland, in the source country. That is unique, right. India didn't fight Britain in Britain, Algeria didn't fight France in France, Vietnam didn't fight the United States in the United States. For the first time that has occurred, and that's a change, and it has a significant effect, but it doesn't change – the basic institutions are the same, the logic of activism, of raising social costs to win non-reformist reforms, which accumulate together into patterns that wins us new institutions; there is no change there.

I honestly, you know the notion that we should back off from our activity, well maybe that made sense on September 12th or September 15th or September 20th, sure you know, because there is a psychological melee, and there is a question of having some degree of sympathy and empathy for people who are suffering and so on. But the idea that now, much less in December or January, February or whatever, we should restrain ourselves from opposing corporate globalization, whose impact on civilians around the world dwarfs the impact of September 11th – and September 11th is just as bad as everybody says it is, which says, of course, that corporate globalization is too bad for words – so the idea that we should not pay attention to that makes no sense to me. We should pay attention to it, and moreover the only way to impact the war or corporate globalization or gender violence or race violence or workplace violence is to build movements that again raise profound social costs, so it's multi-issue movements, it's multi-tactic movements, it's multi... maybe people should take a lesson from this, and the lesson is they

shouldn't go back to a narrow focus; they should try to cultivate ties among the focuses, they should try to add dimensions to their focus because that is what's threatening. It isn't just that we should do that because it is what is morally right; it is, but it's also that we should do it because that is what the powers are afraid of, that's what is in fact a real movement, a movement that threatens things that they care about and raises social costs that they care about, so that is what we should do.

So, in answer to the question – “What do we have to re-think?” – I think we have to re-think the same things we had to re-think before September 11th. I think we have to rethink the absence of good vision, we have to rethink the absence of the answer to the question “What do you want?” whether we are talking about medium-term “What do we want?” if we are against the IMF or World Bank – or whether we are talking about the long-term “What do we want?” for new domestic economies or new domestic polities. We need answers to those questions not because we are going to win it tomorrow but because people need to understand what they are for and what they are fighting for in order to fight sensibly in the near-term for changes to lead toward what they are seeking; that's one reason. People need vision in order to have hope, in order to feel that what they are doing won't be just turned back in the future. Because we will finally attain new structures which make these things natural rather than something we have to defend [from the] ongoing desires by elites to get rid of them. People need it because if we are always nay-saying, we are just nay-sayers; we're not positive, we are just nagging and we are just...I mean those things that they say about us, there is some logic to that. It's because we do sound like that a lot of the time. We need to be positive. So I think we need to rethink our absence in vision; I think we need to rethink the way we relate to the society.

This event makes that...maybe does say something about that. That is to say, we are Americans; we live in this society. We don't have the luxury of saying to ourselves, “We only want to organize people who already agree with us.” If we want to organize people who already like what we like, who have the culture that we have, who have the values that we have, if that's all we want to do, let's just remove the name political from it, remove the name revolution from it. There is nothing particularly wrong with it, but it has nothing to do with social change. We have to organize precisely the people who don't agree with us, precisely the people who don't yet have the aspirations that we have. And September 11th says that powerfully because in the aftermath of September 11th, many peoples' reaction was “Oh, if I go up there people are going to be mad at me; they are going to be hostile to me, they are going think bad things about me.”

So, that just means that it is more important to go out; it doesn't mean that it is less important to go out. And the irony is that it is not true.

The irony is that I have a marine living on one side of me. He is a marine from Vietnam. I spent a couple hours with him talking about it – no problem; he's not going to beat me up. The guy who comes from the computer company to fix computers in our operation, who's a young white guy heading up a small company, the archetype Republican – he listens to Rush Limbaugh and NPR. He had no problem understanding an analysis of the war; it didn't make him angry or violent at me. It made him sort of weepy and angry at what was happening but also feeling, saying to me, precisely in accord with your questions, “I don't want to hear about this because I can't do anything about it; it's just painful if I can't do anything about it,” which is a reasonable response. It's the same reason I don't want to hear a long discussion of the ills of earthquakes. When there is an earthquake, I don't turn on the channel to hear how horrible it was because I can't do anything about it, and it is just painful, but that is because earthquakes are natural calamities, mostly. This isn't. This is something we can do something about.

And with the Left, the thing we need to rethink is, to my thinking, the proportion of our time that we spend trying to explain how bad things are and trying to explain how the system works – capitalism, or patriarchy, or racism, or etc.. The proportion of the time that we spend on that as compared to the proportion of time we spend on what we are for, what our positive aspirations are, what the positive institutions and the positive reforms are that we want, and how we think that movements can get them has to dramatically change. We have to dramatically move from here to here – from what is wrong and how systemic and powerful it is, to what we want and how we are going to get it – because everybody at some very profound level already knows all of this, I think, in the United States. They don't know it the way we know it; they don't know it the way somebody who immerses themselves in it, but at some level, they know it. It's this that they have doubts about; it's that there is anything better or that we can attain anything better. That is the obstacle – the participation – not the feeling that everything is hunky-dory and that we have to convince them that everything isn't hunky-dory. That we have to go out there and convince people who are working shit wages, shit jobs, shit hours, you know who are treated like shit that things aren't hunky-dory. They *know* things aren't hunky-dory. And actually people know that people starving to death isn't hunky-dory. They can understand that; they just feel powerless to do anything about it and therefore don't want to [be] beaten over their heads with it. If we can't tell them what can be done about it, if we can't tell them what the alternative is that is better, they don't want to hear about it, with good reason. So I think we have to rethink the proportion of our energies that are going to these directions, to these relative directions, if we are concerned about actually making progress. But I thought we had to rethink that before September 11th, so for me it doesn't seem to be a dramatic change.

HENRY GIROUX

Human Consequences

My initial reaction to the terrorist acts that took place on September 11th is that first we need to respond to the tragedy of this event. I mean it seems to me that many, many people were killed. We need to exhibit some kind of compassion about this, make it clear that this is a human tragedy of such enormous dimensions that it not only signifies the need for people to come together in some way and to move beyond the kind of isolated set of social relationships in which we often find ourselves, but to begin to cross over and begin to build communities that in fact can nurture, support, and provide the kind of resources that people need, not only in a time of crisis to say the least, but throughout every aspect of our daily lives. It also seems to me that at some level, some of the criticisms that were made were very quickly, particularly on the Left, to suggest that simply because the United States might be considered by some to be a terrorist state, that we immediately sort of focused on that and not in some fundamental way address the human tragedy that took place here; I think this was a mistake strategically. I don't think it's untrue politically in many respects, but I think it was a mistake strategically.

I think it was a mistake strategically because it seems to suggest that these people who died, their lives are not worth talking about. That in fact somehow they have to be held responsible for the crimes that have been committed by United States foreign policy, and it seems to me that we need to begin with the context in which we initially find ourselves and make it clear that in some way we need to address the gravity, the social and human gravity, of this problem and then begin to step back and begin to raise all the kinds of serious questions that need to be raised, once we affirm the human dimensions of this tragedy.

Media Frames

I think initially that the media focused on an enormously limited number of things. I mean, certainly there was a lot of emphasis, and probably very needed on the question of rescue operations, the human interest story; those things were important. They had to give the tragedy, in a sense, a human face. But I think they immediately moved from that, or in conjunction with that, almost created a kind of moral panic by presupposing and accepting the assumption that the only form of response to this was military retaliation. So they, in a sense, moved from a position of compassion to a kind of highly militarized position in which the question of compassion seemed to completely be eliminated from the response. There was no sense that there was some other position, or other positions, that one might take. There was some talk about the need for beefed-up security. And I think in many respects this is completely legitimate, but, at the same time, there was no self-consciousness about the kind of xenophobia that was already in the air in this country. It seems to me that discourses were fanning, and I think in this sense the media becomes very important-- not only as a pedagogical tool, not only because it presents in this instance a very limited number of positions, a very limited range of positions because the media is controlled by a very limited range of corporations. But, in fact, it sets the conditions for people in supporting policies because they have no sense that there are policies outside of the dominant discourse. They end up supporting very limited policies. And I think that the media really needs to be taken to task for this.

I think that in a sense that what the media did was undercut its very possibility for allowing the nation to engage in a conversation about what the conditions were, under which we can truly understand this event. It's not enough to frame the event around the buyerism of democracy versus terrorism because that buyerism is false. Because, in many ways, we have to understand how we've become complicitous; we're at fault to terrorism that might in part explain why in fact so many people throughout the world hate American symbols. Really hate in some way what America is doing. And I think by shutting off that dialogue, it prevents the importance of a kind of national conversation that in many ways won't be simply turned over to experts, won't simply be turned over to the department of defense, won't be simply turned over to people like Bush, and you know, his limited, sort of right-wing contingent of policy makers. And so I think in that sense the media doesn't become a public sphere, the media actually becomes simply an adjunct of established political power and corporate interest.

The Threat to Civil Liberties

I think that it's probably one of the most disgusting things I think that the attempt on the part of the media to in some way take up this debate between security and freedom is really quite representative of how badly it failed in providing a kind of critical analysis of exactly what happened. In many ways, the suggestion that the need for domestic security in some ways outweighs, cancels out, or completely subordinates, the need for talking about, in this time and in this crisis, the need to protect civil liberties. It was all too willing to jump civil liberties in the name of a kind of moral panic that in many ways it had created. I mean one couldn't turn on the television without seeing the word war. In every frame, that was used to sort of shape the kinds of discourses provided by the reporters. And this was true of almost every station. Every major media station, particularly television, of course primarily television stations. So I think in this sense what the media has done has actually established a groundwork in many ways for people to either suspend or to not make problematic what it might mean in the future for these civil liberties to be sacrificed on the altar of a kind of increasing militarism and militarization of not only domestic space, but also to say the very least, space itself. Other's space, for the defense missile system, the need for in some ways more profiling, the need in some ways to shut down the kinds of liberties people have around being able to safeguard their privacy. None of these were taken up seriously.

Why is America So Hated?

When I say that we need to respond by discovering democratic values we need, for instance, in some way to raise fundamental questions about why so many people throughout the world don't see us as the apex of civilization, for instance, or democracy I mean we have to be attentive to the fact that many people see the U.S. as an accomplice of Israel, a partner in the sort of ruthless repression of Palestinians, particularly the Palestinian aspiration for land and for independence. I mean this is a country that provides 3.5 billion dollars a year in aiding Israel. There are many Arabs throughout the world who resent that. They resent the fact that it's United States' money that provides the missiles, provides the planes, provides much of the technology that blows up Palestinian villages, that targets Palestinian leaders, that is used in many ways to militarize and to undercut the possibilities for the Palestinians for having any independence. I also think that we need to be aware of the fact that the U.S. stations troops in Saudi Arabia and in

many cases near sites, some of Islam's holiest sites. Many people are angry over the fact that the United States blew up a pharmaceutical company in the Sudan that was absolutely central to providing drugs and other medical supplies to thousands of people. And in some cases it's suggested, in some sources, that ten thousand people were killed. Many people are angry over the fact that the United States imposes sanctions on Iraq. I mean, these are sanctions that in some cases, according to some sources, has resulted in the death of over a half a million children. So there are many reasons why people are angry [with] the United States.

What we need to do is in some way discover our own history and the arrogance of power that sometimes shapes that history and sometimes allows us to be complicitous with regimes that condemn many, many people to incredible amounts of inequalities, suffering, and oppression. But I also think that, as part of the response to this, we need as a country to discover ourselves as political agents. I mean we need in some way to understand that we need to take back those kinds of public spaces democratic public spheres that increasingly are being privatized in this country and are shutting down the possibilities for democratic debate. That are shutting down those kinds of questions that would allow us to ask, What kind of country do we want to be in the world? What kind of leadership do we want to assume? What does it mean to be a major world power? What obligations do we have to develop policies that are not going to be paralyzed by violence or by militarism? What does it mean in some fundamental sense to take human life seriously? So that we don't align ourselves with nations who in some way function to basically murder, kill, and oppress other human beings.

MICHAEL T. KLARE

A Judicial Response, Not a Military One

Well, like everybody I guess, I was just shocked to watch all that on television. I come from New York City, my family lived there, and I worried about people I might know and was just amazed to see something I never thought would happen. And I worried about all the people who you knew were just perishing at that moment. So it's a pretty powerful image, and I haven't slept well since. You know, I see those images over and over again. I also knew that there would be cries for retaliation; there's always been in the past, and I knew these would be magnified many times and that there was a danger that the response would be equally catastrophic in the sense of destructiveness and death and could get out of hand in all kinds of horrible ways. I knew it would be at the Middle East, I knew that it could unleash all kinds of anti-American sentiment, and who knows where it'll all lead.

So I became worried very early on about the nature that the response or retribution, or retaliation, whatever that was going to take, and I realized, sort of knowing the American Military and the American psyche, that it would not be enough to say, Don't do anything. Let peace prevail, or, Let time take its toll; let time heal things. The restraints and not contribute to the killing, that that would not be a response that people would be able to accept and tolerate, that there was going to be a response. Therefore, if you're going to try to avert a catastrophic situation, which is what I feared, it'd be necessary to try to rally people around a position that would still indicate that you support a strong response to what happened and the punishment of those who are responsible, but not one that would involve massive bombing or a land war in the Middle East or attacking huge numbers of innocent civilians or any of those other scenarios that flashed through my mind.

So I spoke to a few other people but essentially came to the view that we should call for a response that was more juridical than military to think of the image of a criminal investigation, but something along the lines of the manhunt and indictment of Miloslavich of Serbia for war crimes. An international manhunt to bring the perpetrators of this crime to some kind of trial under international law, a war crimes tribunal or something of that character that would have the support of the international community that would be a firm response but would be more in the nature of a criminal procedure a judicial proceeding than a military offensive against the Middle East. So this is what I've been thinking about, and I find many other people seem to share this point of view that we need to make this a firm, decisive response but one that's aimed at justice rather than revenge, or retribution, or slaughter, or a crusade, you know, an American crusade against the Muslim world, which, in some quarters, it seems to have that character.

So far as we can tell, we're dealing with terrorist networks, individuals who are associated with bin Laden or others in his universe. These people are scattered all over the world; they could be anywhere. They're small cells, they're secretive, they're very good at hiding in plain sight, as they were in Hamburg and in Florida. You cannot find these people and neutralize them through a military operation. Are you going to bomb every city where they might be hiding? Obviously not. The only way you're going to truly be able to find these people and bring them to justice somehow or to make it impossible for them to carry on terrorist activities is through a police action, painstaking investigation, trying to track down the leads, the paper trail, the money trail to find these people. And you can only do this with international cooperation: the

U.S. cannot do this on its own. It must have the help of other governments around the world to do that.

If you frame this in that way, as a massive global law enforcement operation, that's the only way that you can truly actually find these people and arrest them or otherwise eliminate their capacity to threaten us. A military action can't do that. On top of that, a military operation is likely to be counterproductive. It's likely to produce more terrorism rather than less because, inevitably, there will be collateral damage: civilians, innocent people will be killed there will be Muslims, there'll be believers in Islam. And all of this will give the appearance that what bin Laden is actually saying is true, that the United States is intent on making war on the Muslim nation, the Arab nation and here's the proof all of these dead bodies. So this would only strengthen his capacity by producing a wave of volunteers who want to avenge those who perished and who want to join in an anti-American crusade. So military action, actually, will have the opposite effect that is intended. If you truly want to eliminate the terrorist threat, and that's something around which I think everybody can agree, it has to be more of this legalistic, police-oriented approach.

How is this Different than the Gulf War?

This is a very different situation than the Persian Gulf War. If you want to use an expression, that was an industrial-style war. We amassed tons and tons of heavy metal tanks, planes, bombs, warships, a whole apparatus of industrial military power to squash another industrial-scale, heavy-metal army. Iraq had a very large military, thousands of tanks and artillery pieces deployed in Kuwait, and our effort was to destroy and smash that military machine; that's what it was about. But what we're dealing with here you can call it, if you want, pre-industrial or post-industrial, some combination of that. We're dealing with tribal people, with small cells, with fanatics, extremists, but very small numbers of them operating independently of any state apparatus. And yet they also have access to modern technology: cell phones, the internet, international banking. So it's a combination of pre- and post- industrial types of warfare that we're dealing with, and you cannot address that problem, that threat, with industrial-style warfare. The Desert Storm model has no bearing on this. What they're talking about is small-scale operations, special operations, command raids, and large-scale police operations to address it. But those could go on a really long time; they could be inconclusive they can get the wrong people so it's not something that has any immediate guarantee of success.

The danger of an all-out military operation is that our adversaries, whether you call them the Taliban or the bin Laden group, they're not soldiers who are grouped together in a fort somewhere or in a military base or installation; they are dispersed in the general population. The leadership of the Taliban are clerics essentially; they're religious leaders, they're housed in mosques and in seminaries the Taliban came out of seminary schools, and their followers are religious students. So these people are dispersed in the general population; they don't have military headquarters or bases that are identifiable and easily attacked. So to attack them with military force inevitably means attacking civilian places, and even religious shrines, is what would have to be targeted. Certainly habitable areas in which the people may be coerced by the Taliban to support their laws and strictures and all that, but they are, in my mind, victims, as much as anybody else, of Taliban rule. But those are the people who are likely to be decimated in an all-out military campaign, and that will provide immense propaganda advantage for bin Laden and his associates to show the Mosques, schools, hospitals, civilian neighborhoods bombed,

smoking, dead women and children in the street. And that will be used as propaganda throughout the Muslim world to say, Look here's the beastly United States; they despise Muslims and think our lives are cheap. Which is the kind of rhetoric or logic, which he uses all along, so it would only play into his hands in the end.

Is Mr. Bush Right? Is This the First War of the 21st Century?

As I see it, the attacks on New York and Washington were, as the President said, an act of war, but this was not Pearl Harbor; this was not the opening salvo in a new conflict, the first war of the twenty-first century, as he puts it. This was part of a continuing struggle that has gone on for quite awhile and goes back to the original contest over who will control the Persian Gulf area and the oil riches of the Persian Gulf. The United States has said since World War II that the Persian Gulf (and the oil of the Persian Gulf) is essential, vital to American national security. And, therefore, we have formed alliances with whomever we could in the area to assist us in protecting that interest. We allied with the Shah of Iran until he was overthrown in 1979 by Khomeini and his followers. Since then, we've relied extensively on the Saudi royal family, the Al Saud family, for our base of support in the area, and, in doing so, we have built military facilities in Saudi Arabia, stationed American forces there to protect the oil flow. When those facilities and the oil flow were threatened in 1990 when the Iraqis invaded Kuwait, we immediately sent a force to protect Saudi Arabia. That was Operation Desert Shield, the prelude to Operation Desert Storm. Since then we've been building up our military capability in the area.

I would say at this point we have so much strength in the Gulf, not only in permanent US forces but also the pre-positioned equipment that's been placed there, that any state would be sufficiently deterred by threat of another Desert Storm to avoid a dead-on conflict with the United States. But you still have those internal dissidents in some of those countries who oppose the American presence, and especially oppose the American presence on Saudi soil, because this is viewed by many people of the Islamic world as a kind of holy land, the site of Mecca and the other named religious sites of the Islamic faith. They deeply detest and resent the American troops, and they hold the Saudi royal family responsible. And, bear in mind, that the Saudi royal family is protected by U.S. troops, both externally and internally, we're closely associated and manage Saudi's internal security forces, who have been involved in suppressing dissent against anti-monarchy dissidents. And it's out of that milieu the anti-monarchy, dissident community, which was suppressed by force and quite violently that bin Laden and his closest associates come. And because in Saudi Arabia they've been unable to express their opposition through legal means there's no freedom of speech and assembly in Saudi Arabia and dissent is silenced brutally; there's no protections they've fled, they've gone underground, and they have resorted in the only kind of warfare that's available to underground, illegal, dissident groups, which is what we call terrorism.

And they have been fighting a campaign that goes back at least to 1995 to drive the United States out of Saudi Arabia and out of the region. The first attack came in 1995 with the bombing of the SANG headquarters in Saudi Arabia (that's the Saudi Arabian National Guard, which is the internal security force, but to a great degree managed by the U.S.). Five U.S. servicemen were killed in that attack in Riyadh. Then they went after the Khobar towers in 1996, and they went after the U.S.S. Cole last year and our embassies. So I think, from their point of view, bin Laden and his associates are engaged in a long term struggle to drive the United States out of the Persian Gulf, and, because they have been unsuccessful up to now with strikes in that

region, that hasn't deterred U.S. determination to stay a power in the area. I think that they chose to strike in our homeland, the United States itself, with the intention of making Americans choose to say that it's not worth it to us any longer to maintain this presence.

This is my attempt to reconstruct their thinking, that this was a strategic move, not a symbolic act but a strategic move to cause such dismay and despair in this country that we would pull out of the Middle East, essentially, and allow them to succeed in their objectives, which are to create a Taliban state in Saudi Arabia and in the entire region, free of American presence entirely. So it was a strategic act. I think they greatly miscalculated because I don't think that they understood how powerful would be the American response, not one of despair and retreat, but it's only going to provoke the U.S. in the opposite direction. I think that they miscalculated terribly, but I'm just surmising from what we know the history of these people, that this was part of a long term strategic campaign that has to do with the control of key sites in the Persian Gulf region.

Can the United States withdraw from the Gulf? I think at this point it would be extremely difficult to contemplate that. At least in the short-term, and the short-term meaning so long as our economy is based as it is on the availability of abundant and cheap petroleum. Our economy absolutely rests on that capacity, and the only place where we can get abundant and cheap petroleum over the long haul that is for the rest of this century is from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. Until we redesign the economy to be less dependent on cheap abundant petroleum, I don't see how the U.S. leadership can withdraw from that area. And I don't think what's understood by Americans is how deeply engrained that point of view is in American foreign policy. It's been overshadowed; it was overshadowed by the Cold War, but even throughout the Cold War, protection of Persian Gulf oil was very high on the agenda it was the origin of the Truman doctrine, of the Eisenhower doctrine, of the Nixon doctrine, and the Carter doctrine. All of them had to do with protecting U.S. allies in the Gulf region or protecting U.S. access to oil. Since the Persian Gulf War, we've only reemphasized that position, expanded our military capability through a massive expansion of the American presence in the Gulf over the past five years. So I find it very hard for any American leadership to turn around on this issue and to begin pulling out of the Gulf, not without reengineering our economy.

Given the fact that we're not likely to withdraw from the Persian Gulf for vital economic and security reasons, we have to be very careful not to produce a region-wide Jihad against the United States. If we go on with heavy-handed military action, that's only going to fan the flames of anti-Americanism and make it harder for us to stay in the region, so the best approach, I believe, to achieve justice in this case (which is what I think comes first) and without provoking an anti-American Jihad in the region, is a juridical approach at tracking down and apprehending those responsible for actual acts of violence or the participation in acts of violence against innocent people in New York City and not a counter-Jihad of our own against the Muslim world. That is a recipe for disaster.

ALISA SOLOMON

The Media & Jingoism

There are so many frightening things about how the crisis is being covered now. I think one of the first things is that the president immediately talked about the attacks on Sept. 11th as an act of war, and the mainstream media immediately accepted that language. And if it's an act of war, then a lot of things follow from that — not least of which is that the U.S. mobilizes its troops, that it prepares for various kinds of military action, and that various kinds of attacks where there may be civilian casualties are justified because, after all, that happens in a war, and so forth. And by adopting this language, the media close off other ways to understand what happened, and therefore other possible ways of addressing it. So, for example, if it's understood as a crime a colossal crime then one way of addressing it may be through international law and through international court structures, rather than through a war. That's not something that even gets debated if the language of war is immediately adopted.

And what we saw, almost instantaneously, was a fusing of the government voice with the mainstream corporate media voice, and this, of course, is terribly dangerous. And we saw it very well during the Gulf War, and it's happening instantaneously here now as well. And I think one of the ways that it's so obvious that I find so completely disturbing is with the little logos that the networks have all come up with for their ongoing coverage of this. Many of them have the word war in them: "America's New War." Some of the others I don't remember, but for sure every single one of them has a flapping American flag. News programs should never have any kind of flapping flag; they should always be independent. I mean, absolutely. And it's just horrifying for me to see the jingoism from what ought to be independent voices of the media. At a time of war is arguably when we need independent media most of all and instead we're getting jingoistic media. You hear anchor people saying we, when they're talking about, say, the mobilization of army troops or something like that. They'll say, We sent ten thousand troops and so forth, and this, I think, is incredibly dangerous.

The Lesson of Israel

Another thing that happened in the reporting almost immediately after the attacks was comparison between the American situation and that of Israelis, in terms of terrorism. And it's a comparison that I invoked myself, instantly, and now wish that I hadn't because it hadn't occurred to me that such a comparison would be used so cynically. I mean, if I had stopped and thought about it, probably that would have occurred to me.

What happened in my case was that I happened, by circumstance, to be a few blocks north of the World Trade Center when the attacks took place. I was on my way to jury duty; I was on Chamber Street, and there I was, and it happened. And there was a guy on the corner with a digital camera and so I asked him for his phone number and I called my editor at *The Voice* and said, You won't believe what I just saw. And he said, Yeah I know, the first images of it just came on the TV. . . . get up here and write something. So, I actually headed to court first, [then] went up to the paper, and as I was walking, I was talking to people — kind of [in]formally but talking to people, sort of interviewing them. And just trying to have a very heightened sense of my very own feelings and observations. And one of the first thoughts I had was that the anxiety that was welling in me as I actually passed a federal building and the first thing I thought of was,

I gotta get outta here; I can't be standing near a federal building because that maybe is the next thing that's going to blow up. And it was the same emotion (though in a more intense way) that I had in August, when I was in Israel, and I was afraid to go into buses or certain cafes or shopping districts, and so on. And, so, I had this kind of narcissistic reaction: Oh my god, I just got back two weeks ago from walking around with this kind of anxiety and now I'm going to be having it again. And so when I wrote a piece, immediately a piece that was up on our website at, I think, 11:30 that same Tuesday morning with that digital photo I described that feeling that I felt in Israel, that I thought I had been able to leave that feeling behind and [that I] felt relief to come home; and I guess I can't feel so relieved anymore. And I had invoked it as an emotional comparison.

Within a day, it became clear that other people were invoking such a comparison in order to say, either from a sympathetic, empathetic point of view, full of condolence and fellow feeling, or even from a kind of crass and gloating point of view, So now you know how Israelis feel, and, therefore, you'll understand why Israelis take so many of the extreme actions that they take against Palestinians. This is not a conclusion I draw from having that feeling, and I regret that some people reading what I wrote are now drawing that conclusion from what I wrote; it's not what I intended. But this idea that we're all Israelis now is a dangerous one because the conclusion that it wants to suggest is that we therefore ought to be taking strong military aggressive action against the sources or our perceived sources of the terrorism. And I think this is the wrong lesson to draw from Israel. I think, if anything, the lesson we need to draw is that military attacks on civilian populations do not reduce terrorism; [they] create more.

Asking Why?

One of the things that the media are neglecting or I might even say, deliberately avoiding is . . . [the question Why do they hate us] I mean, why did this happen? To answer it is to sound like you're giving a justification. And I'm not sure in the end you can give a justification, but I do think that you can explain why Osama bin Laden if it turns out that he is behind this has so many recruits. You know, what is it that makes people politically, ideologically, and emotionally available to this kind of action? Which is another way of [ask]ing Why do they hate us?

And it's a question that is surprisingly befuddling one TV pundit after another, and it shouldn't really befuddle them. . . . When Dan Rather was on the Letterman show, and Letterman, to his credit, looked him straight in the eye and [asked] Why do they hate us? this was one of the most tragic missed opportunities of the American media of this past week, I think, because more people get their political news from watching the monologues of these late night talk show hosts than they do from any other media source; and here was an opportunity for Dan Rather to actually talk about the killing of thousands upon thousands of Iraqis by American bombings of untold numbers of Iraqi children starved by the sanctions you know, the bombing of the pharmaceutical factory. All of those things that go quite pointedly to explain Why do they hate us? This is not a difficult question. Americans are filled with hate right now for whoever did this to us (as they say), [so] it shouldn't be so hard to understand why when thousands of people have been killed by American military that that would produce hatred toward the U.S.. This is pretty easy to understand, yet it hasn't been expressed in the media.

The other thing that gets expressed instead is that they hate us because they're evil and we're good. And this is certainly how President Bush is framing what is happening now, and

he's framing it as an attack on democratic values. And again, the media need to do a better job of explaining the hollowness of this charge because, first of all, of course the U.S. created Osama bin Laden and the Taliban funded and nurtured them, taught them various techniques, gave them weaponry. The powers that did that knew very well that they weren't supporting forces for democracy, pluralism, openness or egalitarianism; they knew that they were supporting fundamentalists. They were making a cynical calculation that those fundamentalists would help us take down that previous evil empire the Soviet Union. But clearly they were not forces for democracy. And so to turn around and say now that they are attacking democracy when we are about to ally ourselves in this fight with yet more regimes that are as anti-democratic as you can get is just incredibly hypocritical and dangerous and, indeed, puts us in more of harm's way. And again, this is an important role for the media to be explaining this; because if we are indeed a democracy and we as citizens do indeed have some say in whether our country is going to go to war and whether it's going to ally itself with other non-democratic forces, we need to know these things. And again, this is the time when the media need to be as independent, as deep, as aggressive, as they do in fact know how to be and they're choosing not to be. I think Dan Rather knows the answer to that question, Why do they hate us? And he was asked this on national television and his answer was blah, blah, blah: This is a disaster.

ROBIN MORGAN

Why did you write *The Demon Lover*?

I get very worried when there's an analysis of a major phenomenon that is sweeping the world, supposedly, and we have only heard from half the human species on it. That makes me nervous, and there was no woman's analysis of terrorism. Also, I myself in the late 1960s and early 1970s, coming out of the Civil Rights Movement and being like so many of my generation – in despair at being able to really affect policies about the Vietnam War or anti-racism or poverty in this country – I had signed petitions and done peaceful marches . . . And, for a period, became involved in violent actions – fortunately, always against property, never against life. And, in fact, the arguments that went on in those circles usually broke down along gender lines with the men saying, “What are you worried about life so much? If you care so much about life, go be a lifeguard.” It was wimpy; it was, you know, womanly. And with the women saying, “No, you know, you have got to make a warning call.”

I wanted to explore both in terms of my own personal history – what had drawn me there. Not only the obvious politics, but what underlay that, and what was the almost erotic attraction – certainly the charisma – of violence. . . . And also what had drawn me away from that in time, fortunately. And then that study, which started as a personal extrapolation, grew to a study of terrorism in the United States, grew to a study of terrorism on the Left, the Right, the Center. State terrorism, religious terrorism, and it became international. And I then spent quite a few years studying terrorism and noticed certain very interesting constants that no one else had pointed out, even though they were the nose on our face.

. . . First of all, obviously, one person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter. But the people who engage in violent activities, whether from the perspective of the state, or the Vatican, or insurgent groups, or national liberation struggles happen to be male people. There are women involved, most certainly; there are token terrorists. We know of them disproportionate to their numbers because they're so unusual. We know of the Laila Khalid, because she looked like an Audrey Hepburn, and she was glamorous, and she was an amazing media figure. We know of Baader-Meinhoff, but the fact that you can name the few women in terrorism is itself indicative of how few there are. And then another phenomenon surfaced which was that the women are there, when they're there at all, because of a man: a father, a brother, mostly a lover. It's a case of *Cherchez l'Homme*, not *Cherchez la Femme*.

And then I began to study what gets men there. . . . When people feel tremendous despair – we're talking about economic inequities, we're talking about profound oppressions – when people have nothing to live for, they become very dangerous. So all of those are obvious. But there's something else underneath that because if violent acts, politically, are only in a political realm, then it kind of leaves us up in the air as to why they're occurring out of the so-called political realm. Also, if violent acts only come from a person who is in a state of ultimate despair, poverty and oppression, that doesn't explain violent acts that are committed with considerable glee by those who have power and wealth.

But you do have to look at the gender breakdown, and then it began to emerge, the more that I studied this, that there is an extraordinary pattern, cross-cultural, of a cathexis between violence, eroticism, and what is considered masculinity, manhood. These are manhood struggles between the father and his son, and, unfortunately, a whole lot of folks, male and female, die in them. And the women don't even get a chance – they're the grass, and they get

trampled when the elephants fight. And I do not think this is inevitable. I'm not saying anything so simplistic as men-bad, women-good. I think that women are, most assuredly, can be violent. Usually, cross-culturally, we tend to be violent in defense of our children; that's the lioness-with-her-cubs syndrome. And only very recently have women actually dared to become at all violent, in *self*-defense; that's a new phenomenon, after thirty-five years of a contemporary, global feminist wave. But we don't get off on it. You don't find us in cells, sort of chortling with glee about planning and committing violent acts.

When you look however at the way manhood is constructed, not only in this society, but cross-culturally, what you find are all of the obvious connections that are so obvious they almost become invisible. They *are* the field. So it's very hard to see them. They are the norm. Ranging from the football hero to extreme sports and wrestling now, all across the U.S. TV, all the Survivor programs, the rock star hero, clad in black leather, setting fire to his guitar, Rambo in American movies. The manhood cathexis, whether it is called "hero" or "samurai" or "bandollero" or "terrorist," is basically the same image. It is a creature who is so passionately given over to an idea that he is both doomed and inviolate. And he is consumed by it. So there's a frisson of fear, where supposedly the eroticism comes in. Until we de-glamorize that and begin to understand it, our children, male as well as female, will continue to die, and to kill. It lies at the absolute heart of this problem, and until and unless we understand that, this problem will not ever go away.

One of the things that amazed me was, I happened by sheer coincidence, when researching *The Demon Lover*, to come across – stumble across – a reviewing of one of the Joseph Campbell Channel 13 conversations, and it sent me back to reading Campbell, in particular, *The Hero*. And of course, Campbell has broken down the great hero myth, and how he always has to go through certain procedures, certain steps, certain rights of passage. This seemed really familiar to me. I took that grid and those rights of passage and those descriptions of the hero, and then I took the cross-cultural portrait that various terrorism experts had agreed on of the terrorist and superimposed them one over the other. And, they were a terrifying literal and perfect match. And at the absolute core of both was a necessary separation from the unmaning influence of the female: she who unmans either because she's a temptress or because she is the mother that you have to separate from. But mostly she is unclean, and she stands for this messy difficult thing called living, as opposed to a clean, tight, dry, linear, Thanatos death wish.

So, when you get that, and then when you get it overlaid as well by religious fundamentalism, whether it is Christian fundamentalism in the U.S., bombing abortion clinics and killing practitioners, whether it is the Christian Identity movement – which was Timothy McVeigh, or whether it is Islamic fundamentalism, or Jewish fundamentalism, or Hindu fundamentalism, the procedures are the same, the plot is the same. And women are always the canaries in the mine. For eight years, we have been beating our fists bloody on the doors of the United Nations and the United States, saying what was happening in Afghanistan was not only gender apartheid, but it was ethnic cleansing of women and girls; it was like a holocaust of female people. The U.S. didn't want to listen because they didn't want to alienate; they want a dialogue, they have an oil pipeline, big money is at stake here. The U.N. didn't care because it was more important to them to try to stop the opium/poppy trade.

"If they come for us at night and the world does nothing, they come for the rest of the world in the morning." To me, this analysis and feminism in general is not just about freedom and agency for the majority of the world species who happen to be female human beings. If it

was only about that, it still would have a very good justification for being, but it happens to be about saving of the other half of the world as well: male people. And without that understanding, the very folks who might unlock the puzzle are kept silent, in Afghanistan – truly silent, in total *purdah* – but in the rest of the world, patronized, tokenized, but not really listened to.

How should we respond to the present crisis?

Well, the problem, of course, with the crisis situation is that long-term answers are the only answers, and people are very, very hungry for short-term responses. I will say that I am surprised and heartened, somewhat, that even an arch-Right wing, extremely conservative, hawkish administration – which the second Bush administration is, even to the Right of the first Bush administration – that even they, and even at the point when the U.S. is the sole superpower, were forced to at least seek the pretense, and preferably the reality, of a coalition before stomping in and dropping bombs. Thirty years ago, that would have not been the case, wasn't the case in Vietnam, wasn't the case in the Congo, wasn't the case in Korea: "What we want to do, we just go in and do it." Now that means some kind of change; it's tragically too little, it's too late, it's absurd, it's microscopic, but I think it is important for activists and progressives in general to acknowledge that. Because not to acknowledge it is to invite further despair and collaborate in the erasure in everything we have been trying to do over those thirty years. Because, the reason that change has come about is because of global pressure. And pressure from within the United States.

So that is a tiny bit heartening, and I must say it's interesting that food is being dropped. I would prefer if it were more food, and fewer bombs, and only food and no bombs. But at least this is a shift; it's a tiny shift. I think that obviously – and this should be in the short-term solution problem – that until the Palestine/Israel situation is solved into a two-state solution, it is the world's tinderbox. I've spent a great deal of time with Palestinian women in the refugee camps of the Gaza Strip and all of the occupied territories, and in fact in the entire region, and I know that those women are articulating a different kind of politics, but also [are] not listened to by any side. But ultimately this kind of situation changes only when you address the root issues. And, the root issues, which sometimes even those in power can agree on are, well, "Yes, the global south is not equal with the global north. We need to do something about these inequalities."

I mean obviously all the issues that what passes for the Left in general would raise are part of a long-term solution. What the Left does not raise, because the Left tends to be run by the male folks as well as the Right and the Center, and the Middle, is what lies underneath even that. And, until that is raised, until we separate our idea of manhood from violence and from *power over*, as opposed to *power to*, until we separate it from being erotic and sexy . . . You know how the tremendous fashion vogue of military clothes, of chains and leathers, and huge deep boots. I mean there is a fascist fashion that has been sweeping certainly this country, North America and Europe, on and off for the last ten years. So, all of those which seem disparate and unconnected, when they come together to create, or to feed, or to further a cultural "norm" which says that man and men are living weapons, and that is what makes them sexy, and that's what makes them MEN. Until that changes, this will never change. Because it will continue to be a dialogue between the father and the son.

The father has power: he is the state. And, basically what he is saying to the son is,

“You have to demonstrate that you can do the same kind of thing that I did to get my power.” If he had demonstrated, and you win, you are not called a terrorist, no. Then you are called Prime Minister, you are called George Washington (who the British called a terrorist), you are called Yitzhak Shamir, who was involved with the Irgun, you are called a whole lot of things. When you get to win, you are a states person; if you lose, you are a terrorist. If you win, you get to be the holy ghost, and part of God-the-father, and you rise right up to heaven; if you lose, you get crucified. It is absolutely extraordinary how the religious, the aesthetic, the political, the personal, the emotional, the sexual, all come together in this incredible knot, which is basically the sexuality of terrorism.

We’ve been, all of us, collaborating in this for centuries; this is called patriarchy, to unfortunately use a word of rhetoric. But now that long fuse that this has been burning on for centuries and centuries, has in an age of globalization, in an age of worldwide ammunition sales, in an age of mass communication, it’s become democratized. Now anybody can have access to it, not just the precious few. It is really the democratization of violence, and the terrorist is the ultimate and logical end of the patriarchal hero. So we will either all die at his hand, or we will free men from his image, and we will free female people from the silence and destruction that his image has visited on all of us.

What are the politics of Eros and love?

I was realizing that some of the quotations themselves are absolutely staggering, whether its Nicheyev, whether it’s the Christian Identity movement could be interchangeable from things that the Ayatollah Khomeini, or now bin Laden is saying. I mean, it all is this profound disgust with the female, and always this same lust, and from “I will be willing to die for it! I want to die for it!” You know it is much harder to LIVE for a cause. Oh! That is like taking the garbage out for the morning. That’s the nitty- gritty; that is the hard stuff.

And when I talk with, and work with, and had the privilege of learning from women around the world, largely almost exclusively, but not totally in the global south. We are talking about women at the extremes of human suffering; we are talking about women in the favelas of Rio, in the camps in Gaza, in the rice patties and Cordilleras of the Philippines, many of them illiterate but very smart, and they articulate a different kind of politics, and different kinds of strategies come from those politics. I think of the women in the Chipka movement in India, who hugged trees to keep them from being leveled, because their livelihood depended on gathering twigs for fuel, and they didn’t want the Japanese and American loggers to fell all the forests. And they simply hugged trees, and the army was sent in, and more women hugged trees. And they were dragged off, and more women hugged trees. And eventually the government had to give up.

Now I am not so naïve to say that non-violent and pacifistic strategies always work. But they are more interesting than violence. We need to begin to get bored with violence, which is where the de-glamorizing has to come in. And what I do find fascinating is that cross-culturally, women tend to opt for more consensual solutions, and for wittier – sometimes fairly wicked – sabotage means, but not means that take human life, ever, or at least not likely. And that I think is not something inherent with women being more moral than or better than... perhaps it has something to do with the fact that we’re less corrupted because we’ve had less power; I don’t know, but, I do know it’s something that men would do well to learn. I do know that there is a reason why in almost every society, the men begin to take the little boys away

from their mothers around age seven or eight – it changes in different societies – so that they won't grow up with those kind of tactics and that kind of influence. No, no, no! They have to be taught, they have to be taken away, they have to go through rites of passage rituals, they have to suffer, and they have to learn most of all to like *inflicting* it. And that creates the politics of Thanatos.

I think that the politics of what I would call the politics of Eros are a politics that free sexuality, for men as well as women, from the idea of conquest, that bring it back into laughter, and amity and tenderness, and the enormous ferocity of tenderness – I don't mean something that is sort of pallid out there – and see it as a kind of constructive and profoundly energizing force. I mean, I think we've got a good model for this, which is why toward the end of *The Demon Lover*, I dip into metaphysics and literally scientific examples and examples of theoretical physics. Not that I'm a physicist, but it is interesting that we've got a good model because the universe works this way. The universe has a sense of humor about itself, and the universe balances its entropy always with creativity and with energy. And as Blake said (a male poet for whom my son is named): "Energy is eternal to light." And the politics of *The Demon Lover*, that romantic death wish hero, are the politics of death. We've got to get free of him. There's nothing interesting about him anymore, for men as well as women.

In what way is terrorism on a spectrum of patriarchal violence?

I think the whole spectrum of patriarchal violence, which to me culminates in the logical extension of the terrorist, is what we have to examine here. For example, fear and living in fear, which now, at the moment, the United States is for the first time in a sense doing. Entire cultures live in fear. Most Saudis for example, under the Wahaab corrupt government of Saudi Arabia, live in fear. They don't have the vote. In Kuwait, women don't have the vote. In Saudi Arabia, at least nobody does, but in Kuwait, only women don't. The kind of terror of poverty, the kind of terror of civilian violence is endemic and epidemic in most parts of the world. This is new to the United States, except it's not new to all of the United States because the battered woman lives in precisely a state of being terrorized. The sexually abused child lives in precisely the same state. The woman who is seriously sexually harassed at work, yet dare not quit because she is the sole support of her kids, and will she get another job? That is slightly to a less degree, but it's terror.

What I'm saying, I think, is that the spectrum goes all the way from the fist in the face to the nuclear bomb. It is the same spectrum. Of course, it differs in degree but not in kind, and until we understand that, we deal with it piecemeal. Or we say, "Well this part of it is bad, but that part's absolutely terrific. It is absolutely wonderful to have a disproportionate amount of young male people die on football fields from sudden heart attacks, 'but that's just sport, that's perfectly ok,'" and not wonder: why does that happen? Or to when there is this kind of gun-saturated culture that we have in the States and when there are the school shootings. Notice that those shootings are not done the way they are described – by children killing children – but they are done by little boys usually killing little girls and female teachers. What does that mean? What does the culture tell us about the expendability of female human beings? And the necessary violence in order to be considered to be a good boy or a real man for male violence? Those are all on one continuum. And so it means then, that to address the anguish and terror of the battered woman is to address terrorism at the same time. It's not the only way to address terrorism, but unless you understand that it's part of the problem, you are part of the problem.

Well and you know now we're hearing all the time about psychologists and all the experts are on television and being quoted in the newspapers and so forth about Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome and that basically the whole of the United States, in differing ways, especially Washington and New York, is under going Post Traumatic Stress. They don't sleep well, [have] dreams of violence, [relive] it, [have] sudden flash backs, [burst] into tears for seemingly no reason, [experience] tremendous depression, [are] unable to really enjoy the capacity for living, [are unable] to laugh, [and are unable] to not obsess about this. Those are all descriptions of the rape survivor, of the battered survivor, all of it.

So what you have is now the entire society, at this exact moment, experiencing what rape survivors and battery survivors go through their entire lives. And then you have to ask: why then do we blame them? What was she wearing that provoked him? Why then do we say, "Why didn't she just leave him? Oh, there wasn't a battered shelter, oh maybe that's a reason, but still women like it, they invite it." Blame the victim. So that's what I mean, I guess, when I say this is a moment of opportunity. This is a chance to actually notice the connections. And the energy lives in those connections; it is when we make those connections that suddenly the brain says, "Oh my God! Oh. Oh." And that's profoundly exciting because it's filled with an energy of creativity and hope and Eros. If we follow that one through that could actually lead us on toward some little, tiny glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. At the very least, it staves off despair another day. And the other doesn't.

I marvel at the patience of women – men should learn patience and women should learn impatience, but we are stuck with patience – I marvel at the way, even now after 35 years of the women's movement, the Right still attacks it outright or trivializes it. We've all noticed Falwell's and Robertson's comments, and some of the Aryan Nations' comments are even more extraordinary: that the Taliban have the right idea about women, that this was a good idea that this happened. I mean extraordinary. But I marvel at the Right's capacity to still trash us and the Left's capacity to still ignore us, basically. And that's, ultimately, perhaps just as well because we are off the map; we stand outside the current paradigm. We offer a paradigm that is uniquely different, really, really different. And I tend to think, I hesitate to say *the*, I tend to think it is *the*, but it sure as hell is *one* of the hands-up lifts that will, could, pull the species into survival. And into literally evolving into some kind of consciousness that, "Hello, we're really just all one, mixed-up, fragile, slightly crazed [group of] human beings. And we all have the same mitochondria. Now what do we do about that?" If we literally regarded the species as a species and extended the sense of *us* from [ourselves] and our immediate famil[ies], and our colleagues, and our culture, and our race, and our tribe out to the species, that would do it. Because no organism attacks itself; it's too smart. We're just not that smart yet. Women offer a different way.

What advice do you have for young people?

Well, to younger women and men: "I feel a great sorrow that this had to happen early in your life." And [I have] a strange maternal guilt, like, "Oops, we meant to fix this." I think about this in terms of my son: "Literally, I wanted to have this fixed by this time, so you wouldn't have to." But it doesn't happen that way. But what I would say is, "There is a Chinese ideogram for catastrophe or calamity, and it is the same exact ideogram for opportunity. It is very wise. And this is one." And young people, gen X or gen Y, have been accused of being apolitical or not caring. You know the media lied and said, "It's a post-feminist generation," for

awhile, until they were finally forced to realize that there were a whole lot of young feminist women out there. So it is an opportunity, and it really is also up to them. Not that we are passing on a flaming matchstick to anybody: “You get your own torch; I’m still holding onto mine.” But it is an opportunity in that the planet is very small and very fragile. And smaller now than it [has] ever been. I would say to them, “You come of age in a time when communication has never been so simple and dynamic around the world, and that means that the whole species is poised at the edge of an evolutionary leap.”

When I say that feminism is the politics of the 21st century for men as well as women, I don’t mean that as hyperbole. Because until we understand that more than half of the human species has been kept silent, that suffers first and worst from all the catastrophes, and is the last or least ever consulted about how to fix them, until we change that, nothing will change. “You have a chance to change that,” I would say to them, “as men as well as women, and it always starts in your own lives, and it’s a whole continuum from there out through the rest of the world.” And I would say to them that each one should try because it is very heady; it’s quite miraculous, it’s fun in a strange, tiring way. I would say, “Carry yourself as one who will save the world because then you will. You will and God knows the world needs it now more than ever.” So I would say to young men, “Listen to women; listen at lots of different levels because you will also hear things about yourself that will help you be a better human being.” And I would say to young women, “Listen to each other and yourself and trust that. And don’t be afraid, whatever else you’re afraid of, don’t be afraid to be audacious.”

DIANE LEVIN

How are kids reacting to September 11th?

There have been a lot of amazing stories coming up around ways children are taking what they hear and trying to make sense out of it, or becoming afraid of it, or just kids who aren't paying any attention at all. And that is pretty much what we would expect – a whole range of responses. Some kids hear about it, and they think it's like a movie; they've seen dramas like that, so they don't pay attention particularly. They've learned not to pay attention to that kind of stuff, like the movie "Independence Day." And then they'll see that adults are acting differently than when it's entertainment violence, so then they start worrying. I've seen children who end up being afraid for themselves, so they start having nightmares. Or kids who start being afraid for their parents who may work in a skyscraper or be about to go on a plane. Or a child who heard Wall Street mentioned as near where the buildings blew up, and she knows her dad goes to Wall Street, so even at four, she is worried about [him] whenever he travels and leaves.

To children who are enjoying the power of building towers and knocking them down because they saw it on television, it looked really powerful and amazing. And, at four, they just think of just one thing at a time, and that power, they're not worried about all the other things that happened in relation to it, so they think, "Gee, I can build towers like that, too. I'm going to do it and feel powerful." Then adults are worried and think, "What do I do when that happens?"

So there is this whole array of quite predictable kinds of responses but also not predictable. I mean every child is unique, the way they are going to put the meanings together. But there are certain kinds of things we know that make it . . . kind of when we see what children do, it's quite understandable, and there's a certain range of kinds of responses we would expect to see, and we are. Like certain kinds of themes in kids' responses. Like kids will often focus on, "What do I know about what I heard?" Like, "I know about skyscrapers," or "I know about airplanes," and they take what they hear and bring it to what they already know. That's pretty typical. If they've had no experience with airplanes, they are thinking it will be more like an adventure movie. If they've been on an airplane, they may be more worried.

And another thing will be, "Am I safe?" or, "Is my Mommy safe? Because she works in a skyscraper, and skyscrapers can blow up," or, "Is my Daddy safe? Because he flies and he is going off on a plane, so is that going to be dangerous?" There can be kids who go to the airport now and see all the metal detectors and all the people in line waiting and all the careful things being done, and searching, and so then they will feel safe. Because there are all sorts of things people are doing to make sure they're safe. So they won't think of, "So what if this happens instead?" or, "What if that happens instead?" until they get to be maybe seven or eight, when they might start thinking more about the *what ifs*.

Part of children's reactions, when they are young, has to do with how the adults around them react. Now adults totally ignoring it and pretending it didn't happen isn't necessarily the right way to respond either because maybe then kids think, "Maybe I shouldn't talk about it." But adults who – every time the child is out of their sight – start being worried, or every time they see an airplane, the child feels the parent tensing up, or they hear the parents talking about it, or adults talking about it – "What if this happens," or, "I could have been on that plane," or, "I know someone who was supposed [to be there]" – then they can start feeling much more nervous. So one of the things that worries me is the lessons kids are going to take away about the world as being dangerous, not being able to trust people; that worries me.

Another thing that I worry they're going to learn is what we're hearing about – about all the different kinds of racism and kinds of attacks that are happening, about Muslim people being attacked. I just heard a story of a child who was talking about bad guys and good guys and “Who are the bad guys? And who are the good guys?” And he actually said he saw a picture of someone they thought was a terrorist, who blew up the plane, but he wasn't “because he didn't have on one of those hats.” And he meant “one of those kinds of turbans” that he [sees pictures of terrorists wearing]; those are the bad guys for him, so the guy who everyone is saying could have done it, and we are hearing in the news did it, he's saying, “That couldn't be it.” And he is totally happy with his solution. But now, look what he's learned from that. We want him to be safe, and he's sorted it out for himself, so he feels safe. And people who look like the terrorists couldn't possibly be bad.

I mean kids are struggling to sort out the world: What is good? What is bad? Who can I trust? Who can't I trust? When am I safe? When am I not safe? And also, in a world where they know they need adults to keep them safe because they are little, and this whole experience leaves them trying to figure it out, using what they know, trying to figure out how to be safe with it. And then they are learning lessons about who is good, who is bad, who can I trust, who [can I] not [trust]. So I am really worried about the lessons because there is so much talk about what's happening to immigrants from the Middle East who are here, people who look Middle Eastern, people who are part of the Islam faith. It really worries me because little kids don't have the tools to sort out all the logic. Just like that boy who was talking about how you look and who is sinister and who isn't. He has a very static visual image of good and bad. He doesn't think about all the things that are underneath that lead to being good and bad and little kids can't. So they are ripe for the worst kind of stereotyping.

We have a big impact on what they learn, but they have to figure it out for themselves; a five year-old can't fully sort it out. So [a] teacher I was talking to who had [an] experience with [a] child, [who] kept talking about good guys and bad guys and kept trying to complicate his thinking: “Remember the man who came to school last year who had one of those turbans. Was he a bad guy?” This child said, “Well I was scared at first, but then I wasn't when he started to talk to me. He wasn't a scary guy; he wasn't a bad guy. He was really nice.” Helping kids connect to prior experiences. So they don't look at all the inconsistencies in their thinking. If at the moment this is how they are seeing it, they don't think about all the other things they know that might contradict that. So we need to, in some ways, help them see those contradictions without giving them all the information in simple language and assuming then they'll understand it.

How do teachers handle the classroom?

I was just working with a group of teachers from preschool through third grade, and one of the things that the teachers of four and five year-olds were saying is that a lot of parents worked very hard to protect their kids from hearing anything about it, they thought. And they were adamant; they did not want it to come up in the classroom. And the teachers felt really uncomfortable about that because they saw their role as having a place where if kids wanted to raise the issue, they could. If they wanted to build towers and knock them down, they could. And some parents said, “No, no. They can't; [we] don't want that.” And there are other parents who don't pay much attention at all, who had the TV on, [and] kids were coming along [who] hadn't seen it. There was the case of one parent who [was] trying to protect her four year-old,

but her four year-old knew all about it, talked about a plane going into a building, and it was on fire. And it turned out the mother was going to put a video in the TV, and the TV came on as the mother was putting the video in, so the little girl saw it that way.

So, I feel that kids are being exposed to lots of these things, and grown-ups trying to protect kids or [not] talk about it can't make it perfect. There's no way to protect kids and not protect others. So we need to have safe ways they can talk about it. And part of safe ways is not imposing our ideas fully on kids but letting them talk. So this little girl could tell a teacher that "my mommy didn't want me to watch television but I saw it." So the teacher asks, "What did you see?" and the child said, "Well I saw a plane going into a building." And she started talking about the plane going into the building, "And that's why we didn't have 'after-school' yesterday, isn't it?" She is trying to put together her experience.

And for little kids, all of our politics isn't necessarily what they need. They've heard from us that fighting is bad. When a child, when a second-grader says, "Well, you say fighting's bad, but that's what the army's doing," then we want to turn it back to them and find out, "Well, what do you think about that? What did your parents say? Well, some people think this, I think that." So that it's presented that people think in different ways. I don't think many young children will really be asking the question that way because they're much more concerned – for them the war may seem really exciting and they'll focus on the excitement – and some children won't think necessarily about what it means for real people.

I remember seeing a wonderful discussion during the Persian Gulf War in a classroom where a lot of the kids were talking about, "Well, we need our oil, so we have to go." (This was a kindergarten/first grade.) "So we have to go bomb them. That's how we're gonna get our oil back." And figured it out that way. Then [someone] would say, "And then there's all the oil that's in the water so then..." (Remember there was a lot of environmental damage and things), "So there's a lot of oil in the water, so all the fish are getting hurt and what's going to happen to the fish and the birds?" And so they started talking about both the harmful things that could happen and why they were fighting all together. And that was okay, we were giving...complicating their thinking, they were seeing there [are] negative effects, and the teacher didn't need to say what. Then a child raised her hand and said, "But what about all the people who are dying, and the little children whose parents are dying?" This was a six year-old. And so then they had to talk about, "When people fight, sometimes other people get hurt, and it makes us feel really bad that they get hurt and I feel..." and the teacher said, "I feel bad that anyone has to get hurt, that we can't figure out a way – like we do in here – to solve our problems without anyone getting hurt. Who has ideas about that?"

Now, I heard of a wonderful story of a third grader, who, when the teacher asked that question about the bombings that just happened – the terrorism on September 11th – was very quiet, and then he raised his hand and said, "You know what I think should happen? I think that people who work in tall buildings should all get parachutes." And the teacher starts saying, "Well how would that work?" "And they could get lessons in using parachutes and everyone would have a parachute at their desk, so if anything happened..." And I think he had probably seen people falling out and that was the thing he was thinking about the most. They could all have parachutes, so they could jump out of windows and no one would be hurt. And for him, he was thinking of, "How do you keep people safe? What do you do have a more peaceful world?"

Without getting into the politics or anything else, I thought that was just wonderful. That's what kids need to be able to do at these times: come up with powerful ways to solve problems. And they get much more interested in that, and they've experienced then world

politics. As kids get older, it can get more complicated, but when kids are young, often if we learn how to have give-and-take discussions where we hear what they think and we build our ideas on that, those kinds of political differences, we can be teaching peaceful messages without getting into politics.

Just as I'm saying we need to respect children and their ideas, parents need to feel like they're heard, too. So if a parent comes in and says, "I don't want my child hearing about what happened on television." So for a teacher to say to a parent, "So it sounds like you're really trying very hard to protect your child from what's happening. Tell me more about what you're trying to do and why you think that's important." And as you hear from the parent say, "Well I care about all those kinds of things, too, so let me tell you what I'm trying to do. You want your child to feel safe and not be scared. Here are things we're doing in the classroom, so it's like that. But sometimes in the blocks, children start building towers and knocking them down. And I feel like kids need to feel like their ideas and the things they want to try or say are safe here. And I make sure when they build with the blocks and they knock them down, no one's going to get hurt. But I need to let children have their ideas and come in and feel safe too, so we need to figure out a way for your child to be part of that happening that you feel okay about."

And then having a conversation about that – a problem-solving conversation – and say, "You know, when kids knock down towers, they don't necessarily think of everything you think of right now when [you imagine towers] being knocked down. They don't understand all the things of the world and all the kinds of things that can happen and have happened. They're much more into feeling that power, and they've seen a picture of buildings falling down, and they want to play that out and see how it works and feel the power of it and they'll get beyond that and we'll talk about other things. But for parents to say, "Well I don't want him doing it," and saying, "Well then, let's think about what we can do, so maybe we can have other things he can do during that time." I think at some point, we need to decide to say, "Well I'm sorry there's nothing I can do about it," or, "Here are accommodations I can try to make. Does that make you feel better?" And seeing if we can't come up with something we can all agree to.

How do kids relate to the flag?

I think a flag doesn't mean to young children what it means to us. I mean a child is busily making meaning now about what a flag means, but it's still going to be different. So I think we should ask kids. . . Well, to back track, first I think one of the issues that we need to deal with post-September 11th is for young children, what they're going to focus on is all the things that feel different in the world right now from how it felt before. So now they're seeing lots of flags and [are] going to ask, "Why are there all those flags?" Another thing, I heard of a little boy who lives in Chicago who is a refugee – he's seven – and he suddenly said to the social worker who is working with his family, "What does it mean 'proud to be an American'?" Because that's plastered all over Chicago, and he can read. And he wanted a whole conversation about what does that mean and then he said, "Am I an American? Am I proud? I'm an Ethiopian." He was really confused about how he fit into all the jargon he was hearing. And she could talk to him and reassure him about it. Kids seeing the flag will say, "That's different now; there are flags everywhere. Why is the American flag everywhere?"

Some kids don't even understand what a country is; I mean, a country for a four year-old or a five year-old. I mean, when I taught kindergarten in the town of Wayland, and we one day got a map of the city and put little pins where different kids lived so we could talk about who

lives near each other. I didn't expect them to be able to read the map, but if they saw a pin with their name attached, they could read their name and they said, "Yes I do live right next door to Johnny, and there's his name right near mine, but I live far away from Jose and there's his all the way over there on the map." So we were sitting in a meeting, and kids were saying their addresses and one little girl said, "I live at 127 Green Street, Wayland, Massachusetts," and another child looked at her and said, "You live in Wayland? I live in Wayland!" and was all excited. They *all* lived in Wayland, but suddenly there was a connection about what a town was and something that brought them together. Well to say, "I live in the United States; you live in the United States," for some kids has very little meaning to "What is a country?"

If one child lived in Weston, and his parents were divorced so they lived in two different places, but he went to school in Wayland and he saw on the map that Weston's right there, and there was a line between it and he was really confused: how could he go to school here if he didn't live here? So kids are struggling to figure out geography. I mean a country is an arbitrary designation; it's an abstract concept. A flag represents that abstract concept, that arbitrary designation. Yet people have all these feelings around it. So, for young children, they're going to begin to learn somehow that this is special; it has to do with this terrible thing that happened, if they've learned it's a terrible thing. When we go to war and they see people waving flags they know, somehow, that has to do somehow with us being safe and us being good. And I think for young kids, they do tend to dichotomize 'good' and 'bad,' 'we' and 'them.' And the flag can contribute to that, but it doesn't have all the meanings that it does for grown-ups, so I think it's important to have conversations with kids: "Where have you seen a flag? Why do you think flags are there?" And so that's really the important way to deal with it, and we don't...you know, getting into the patriotism is not... we assume that's what it means for kids, but we need to deal with their meaning-making, and that's where we can affect where they're learning about that.

BELQUIS AHMADI

What Role do Women Have to Play in the Reconstruction of Afghanistan?

Well so far the way that Afghan women have been portrayed in media is the picture of the women wearing burqas and being on the streets. What's missing is that under those burqas, we have lawyers, teachers, judges, engineers [and members of Parliament] who have been pushed away from public life by the Taliban. Prior to 1992, Afghan women made up 70% of the all the school teachers in Afghanistan, made up 40% of government employees and about 50 to 60% of university professors. And what's missing is that those women can make a big contribution to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. So that's missing. We have to reach out to those women and talk to them about what they want. Like now in Pakistan the majority of educated Afghan women who are now living in Pakistan have been organizing. They have been preparing for such an opportunity to come and then go back and take part in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan.

The messages I get from Pakistan from Afghan women – they are saying that all meetings almost everywhere – about post-Taliban Afghanistan, the future of Afghanistan – but, unfortunately, women are not included in all those meetings. Not including women in all these peace talks and meetings about reconstruction of Afghanistan undermines women's role in the future of Afghanistan. I have been getting messages from women that [say], “Look. . . the international community should realize and understand that we, the Afghan women, make more than 50% of the population in Afghanistan, and we can make a great contribution.” Because when men [were] fighting in Afghanistan, the majority of them – women – were preparing for peace. Who do you think. . . when men were fighting, there was no educational system in Afghanistan, no health system in Afghanistan; it was women who were working on all these issues. When the Taliban, for example, banned public schools for girls in Afghanistan, women decided to establish home schools, so that is how they continued their struggle. I think the struggle for democracy and independence is not only fighting with guns, [but it is] fighting different ways: raising up children, preparing for peace. So they very much want to be included and they are prepared to take part and play an important role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

What are the Major Issues that Need to be Addressed in a Post-Taliban Afghanistan?

As an Afghan woman, as someone who lived under the Soviets, the Mujahideen and the Taliban, the message for the new government and also the United Front would be to respect the human rights of women, human rights in general but especially women in Afghanistan, and also to think of peace not as absence of war but peace as equality, justice, and human rights. And there won't be any peace and stability if there is no justice. And if women are not included and they are not respected as equal citizens of Afghanistan, that's not justice, and there is not peace. So my message to them would be not to repeat the mistakes that were done between '92 and '96 by Mujahideen groups; things have changed now. We don't want civil society and especially women to be victims of war between different factions again. And to the international community, to not leave Afghanistan the way they did after the Soviets left. We need help from the international community in rebuilding our country. We have lost everything. More than

twenty years of war is a lot. We had wars, we had natural disasters, we had drought for more than two years, and, unfortunately, ethnic clashes inside Afghanistan. So we need help and we want them to help Afghan people in rebuilding their country.

People are still leaving Afghanistan, especially the provinces that are still under the control of the Taliban. There are thousands and thousands of refugees, not only in the borders of Pakistan but also in Tajikistan and Iran, and those people need help. The international community should pay attention to their needs. Humanitarian assistance and relief assistance should be provided to them. Now that winter is coming, I just can't imagine how they are living. I was in Pakistan last winter, and it was really heartbreaking to see how people were living in the camps. At least they were in the camps, but these new arrivals, they don't even have shelter. There was a big influx of refugees and they need help. The international community should really pay attention to that.

What happened on September 11th in New York and [at the] Pentagon was really hurtful, and it shouldn't have happened. But I think the United States should have interfered in stopping terrorism in Afghanistan and in the region a long time ago. I don't want to blame the United States for what happened in New York or [at the] Pentagon, but I think sometimes it really helps to listen to people. Afghan people have been crying for help from the international community for stopping terrorism and war in Afghanistan, but unfortunately no one took them seriously. If the United States and [the] international community had continued their support in the reconstruction of Afghanistan after the Soviets left, I think, now people like Osama bin Laden and his supporters wouldn't have been in Afghanistan.