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SHE

NOVEMBER 2001

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Fakhr-e-Alam
frankly speaking

**Styles & accessories for
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Masetti



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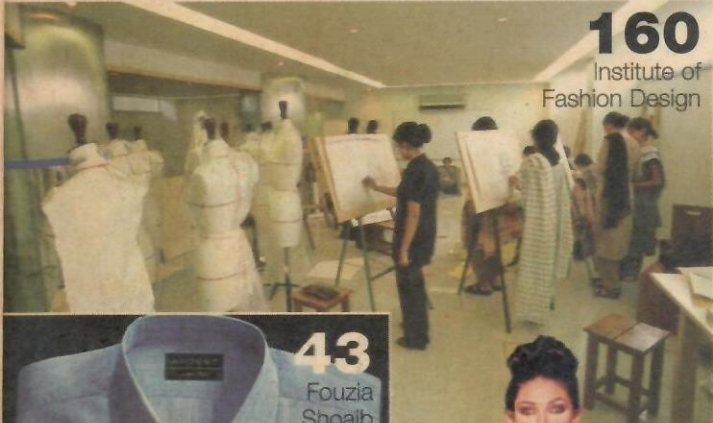
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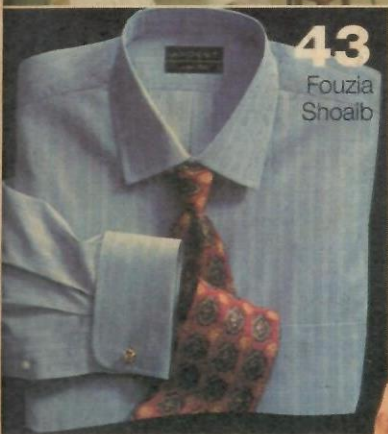
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The Sleeping Giant Awakes

Political pundits tell us that the extremist element in Pakistan numbers not more than 5 percent of the population. The vast majority, while deeply religious and essentially conservative, are basically moderate in their thinking and believers - and supporters - in the Quaid-e-Azam's ideals of a modern and progressive state. Few people would disagree. And yet, in recent weeks the world has been shown the face of a Pakistan that represents the very tiny segment of religious extremists who have taken to the streets of the towns, up and down the length and breadth of Pakistan, rioting, screaming, burning tyres, destroying ambulances and causing mayhem and havoc in demonstrations of protest and anger against America, and the bombing of Afghanistan. Their leaders have called for the removal of President Musharraf and the installation of a government that is pro-Taliban.

The vast majority of Pakistan's people support President Musharraf and the world coalition in their fight against terrorism - the images of the destruction of the World Trade Towers in New York remain permanently etched in our minds - but there is a growing unease at the prolonged bombing in Afghanistan, now in its fourth week, and of the numbers of civilians who are being killed. There is much disquiet being expressed at the influx of Afghan refugees, of the economic hardship that will be further imposed on us by their presence in Pakistan, of the corroding effects of their drug and Kalashnikov culture that has already seen such turmoil and misery among our people over the past two decades. The demand for peace is beginning to make significant headway allied with support against terrorism, extremism and war. Karachi is once again in the forefront of these rallies in which noted judges, human rights and social activists and leading citizens of the city have been taking part. Strong condemnation of religious bigotry was the rallying cry at the meeting of the 'silent majority' represented by some 500 men and women gathered together earlier in the week at the Karachi Press Club.

A drop in the ocean perhaps, but it is a welcome beginning. In any case, several such drops do make an ocean, they say. Has at last that sleeping giant, the vast majority of Pakistan's sane and civilized, moderate and peace loving people, awakened from its slumber? Will the grim and ghastly death of 16 worshippers gunned down by terrorists in a church in Bahawalpur last Sunday morning, finally force the government into taking overdue, but essential steps, to fight terrorism and religious extremism in Pakistan? Let us hope, and pray, so.

Zuhra Karim

The Palestinian Connection

The root cause of the rage against America

In 1969 Yost, an American Ambassador to Syria, wrote, 'After twenty years, so many dead, so much waste and suffering, world peace more and more threatened, there is no time to be lost.'

Now after over 50 years world peace has been threatened. The Armageddon predicted may be round the corner for humanity. America recovers from the horror of September 11 and recoils in fear at the current anthrax scare; Afghanistan is being bombed daily to destroy a regime supposedly responsible for the terrorist attacks; and Israel continues its infringements on Palestinian territory with a vengeance for the assassination of their minister Rehavam Zeevi.

Historical Perspective

But what are the historical roots of so much hate?

More and more Jews began emigrating to Palestine with the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe during the 1880s. In 1887 the World Zionist Organisation was founded to find a solution to the problem in Europe for the Jews. As the Second World War approached, more and more Jews began emigrating to Palestine, 'the promised land' foretold in the Jewish holy book the Torah, fleeing persecution in Germany and France.

At the end of World War 1 the Palestinians had helped the British to take control of Palestine from the Ottomans. In return they were promised independence. However, under the Balfour Declaration of 1917 the British also promised a state with in Palestine to the Jews in return for assistance in World War 1.

Palestine is 'the promised land' as foretold in the Torah. It was a region from which they had been expelled by the Romans some two thousand years ago. And hence the insistence that a homeland must be found for them around Jerusalem.

Britain obviously found itself in an untenable position with promises to both Jews and Arabs. When Jewish immigration increased riots erupted and the number of Jews were restricted during the Second World War. Realising the nature of the problem Britain passed Palestine onto the UN in 1947.

The UN voted in favour of a Jewish state and drew up plans to carve out Palestine into two states. The Jews accepted and the Arabs rejected the plan. On May 15, 1948 Ben Gurion declared the foundation of the state of Israel. Immediately Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan invaded but by 1949 were beaten back by a well-organised Israel which managed to take control of additional territories not mandat-

ed by the UN.

Minor hostilities continued with a better-financed and organised Israel managing to hold its borders. In 1964 the Palestinian Liberation Organisation was formed to liberate Palestine and destroy the state of Israel. The organisation sought to be the sole voice for the Palestinians whilst trying to organise a better response to the plight of the Palestinians. On 5 June 1967 after small-scale hostilities between Israel and neighbouring Arabs, Israel launched a pre-emptive strike capturing the vast tracts of the Sinai peninsula from Egypt, the Golan Heights from Syria, the West Bank and the old city of Jerusalem from Jordan.

Negotiations have since centred on the return to pre-1967 borders.

On October 6 1973 Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel during the holy day of Yom Kippur. After initial losses Israel regained nearly all the lost territory.

In 1979 the new president of Egypt, Sadat, signed a mutual recognition treaty with Israel, the first Arab state to recognise the state of Israel. Israel withdrew from the Sinai peninsula.

On June 6 1982 in response to attacks from Lebanon, Israel invaded Lebanon as far north as Beirut. In 1985 Israel withdrew under pressure from the UN keeping southern Lebanon as a security buffer.

During the 1980s Jewish settlement of occupied land continued unabated. This has been the major obstruction to peace settlements. The occupied territories

were being occupied by Jewish settlers whilst the Palestinians weltered in refugee camps across the border. By 1987 the Palestinians launched their Intifada against Israeli occupation.

With a view to finding a solution to the crisis, the Norwegians hosted secret talks between the PLO and representatives from Israel. In 1993 the Oslo Accords were agreed upon which provided for mutual recognition between the PLO and the state of Israel with the PLO being given increased control of some areas of the occupied territories.

In May 2000 Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon after nearly 20 years of occupation. However, in October 2000 the far-right Ariel Sharon visited the *al-Haram al-Sharif* Mosque in Jerusalem provoking the Palestinians into the current year long Intifada. The ensuing instability in Israel brought down the Barak government with Ariel Sharon being elected as Prime Minister. Sharon refused to deal with 'terrorists' and progress was brought to a halt after many years of efforts to bring peace to the region.

The current crisis has been precipitated by the right-wing Sharon pursuing an active policy of populating the occupied territories whilst using the well armed military to attack Palestinian towns. America, on the other hand, has been an active sponsor of Israel channelling huge amounts of financial and military aid to it.

Marketing in hospitality

The Honda forte people call it concept marketing. Which is not really enough of a compliment to the programme, in which the package deal offers cold drinks, fruit juices and tea on the house! That is if your guest list does not exceed twenty five persons, for that is precisely the number of people that the Honda Forte lounge can accommodate. Already having built a reputation for their elitist handling of clients, the Honda people have, by opening the basement lounge

of their Defence showroom for private entertainment, moved up in public eyes. "The idea", says their sales manager, "Is to bring people into an environment of Honda cars." Which is an understatement to say the least... the basement lounge with its big screen television, leather seating, black tiled floor and wall décor has been dressed up to kill. Look like one big statement on Honda products. The designer has been lavish in using his creative ingenuity by the use of Honda car parts... tyres, seat belts even mechanical parts... all over the place. Never have the 'bare' technicalities of a motor vehicle been displayed with such attractive thought. The result has been an aesthetic statement of the business itself. Call it subtle sales gimmickry!

So as of now you can host a birthday party, an exhibition, a meeting or just a family get together in their basement lounge. You do not pay for the premises nor for the drinks, but party snacks are your own headache. The lounge also holds open house programmes like a art sketching, musical sitting or a palmistry session, on a monthly basis as a bid to make entertainment accessible to one and all. But probably it is the small groups of friends who are making the most of the offer because on any given day there are likely to be friends chatting over cups of tea and nibbling at snacks.

For the more private visitor, there are untold options on offer, like watching a movie of your choice, exploring the internet or just leafing through the pages of a magazine. All you need to remember is that 'Honda' car is the last word here. It has to be, since even the center tables are glass sheets supported on glistening car tyres.

A Day of Reckoning

Indeed, to be reckoned with, was the program behind what had been designed as a one-day seminar targeting women who harbour ambitions of entering the business world. Given the low profile lives local women lead externally, it is no surprise that most females, even if they have acquired the training, shy away because of simply not knowing how to do what and where to go for implementing their skill training as an income generation endeavour. Supported by SMEDA and realizing that in spite of having trained some twelve hundred women in various saleable skills there still remained the need for providing them motivation for entering the actual business world, SWA organized a seminar.

This is not to say that the SWA has not moved forward for, since the last one-year they have set up their Centre for Enterprise Development. Designed as an auxiliary body, this centre occasionally arranges opportunities for women who have graduated from the SWA but have not been successful in generating income. This time round they brought together women with saleable skills and some others who had made it big through working on their skills. The idea was to motivate the less successful ones.

Amer Siddique of Consult opened the seminar by elucidating upon how business can be started up and how it can be further developed by marketing. Speakers Ghazala Perveen and Shamoon Chaudhry explained the intricacies of finance handling while Shehzada Mazhar spoke of the regulations binding business deals. Seminar participants would have done well to listen to the sound advice given. Indeed the entire information package gelled together to form a business file... almost the last word in generating income through the skills imparted at the SWA.

The seminar was rounded off by the talks of two success story women who by following the correct pattern of entrepreneurship are today big names in the business world. Both Mussarat Misbah of Depilex and Seema Aziz of the Bareeze fame are household names and wonderful role models for others. Initially keeping clear of their present status in the business world, both women talked of how they had worked their way up and how it was possible for others to follow the same road. Much applauded as they stepped down, Misbah and Aziz would have re-enforced entrepreneurial ambitions in the SWA trainees that day.



The Alternative Art

Looking for peace through art, a group of teachers and student artists from NCA got together at Art Shart and focused their energies on resolving the current conflict that has overtaken the world. As participants in the seven day workshop held prior to the exhibition, they all worked together around the basic theme "Depiction of

Terrorism and War". The result was an interesting mix of ideas brought to life in various media. The final collection of 'installations' included various art forms from embroidery on fabric, to digital images with text, to photography. Each reflected the interpretation of the basic theme as filtered through the creativity of the individual artist.

Senior artist Salima Hashmi's "A Hard Rain" was an inspiration from a very famous song by Bob Dylan, released in 1976 after the Vietnam tragedy. Using charcoal, egg tempera, pastel and collage on hand-made paper, she had worked around the photograph of an Afghan girl, picked from one of the newspapers. Her use of charcoal and cobalt blue pastel with a small white streak across various dark images created a contrast, portraying a hope for the dawn of peace. Another interesting display had been put up by young Ayesha Khalid. She had chosen a unique combination of camouflage fabric, threads and needles. There were four wooden embroidery frames on display, with red roses embroidered on them. The last of the quartet had only a pencil tracing of a rose with many needles stuck on it. "The red threads in the needles depict flowing blood". Ayesha had previously been working in Europe on a similar theme. There too she had used camouflage fabric and oil paints, hence the idea for the current workshop show. The result was subtle yet suggestive through the use of a blood red cloth in the third frame of her series, showing blood. The addition of chain-stitched embroidery symbolised barbed wire.

Imran Qureshi displayed a series of black and white photographs that showed cut hair, followed by forceps and scissors. His was, apparently, the result of intellectual and artistic thought as an interpretation of everyday newspaper reports. Rather diplomatic and short?

The most intriguing, and captivating display was the five shirts titled "Seclusions 5" by Sania Samad. "The



five purple shirts are an acknowledgment to my five, female colleagues," she explained. Justifying the needles on the shirts, Sania added that, the needles look like hundred and thousands of missiles depicting a sensation of pain. Small velvet cushions in the same colour were present to give the impression of support in times of strife.

Samba Vine had used gouache, mirrors, paper and electric lights to make a magic box, inviting people, to "Look for their dreams and thoughts through the peep hole". The result was a kaleidoscope of images from eyes, motifs to three-dimensional cubic figures. The exterior of the box flaunting a beautiful, Islamic motif in turquoise blue and pale emphasised the whole concept.

Masooma Syed, sacrificed her own fingernails to make "No man's land". She used ten fingernails, glued them together and hung them with a fine white silken thread. "When I glued them together they seemed to me like the Afghan's barren hilly land, devoid of life", she spoke softly. The shadow created against the wall on which Masooma's work was hung added to the overall effect.

Quddus Mirza, artist, column writer and teacher, used the power of that carried a simple message reading: "Sorry for inconvenience". His justification was that whenever art lovers and critics come to exhibitions, they evaluate art with their preconceived ideas and mentally transform the ideas put forward by the artist in ordinary words.

Quddus' script was a total surprise, accentuated all the more by the use of suitcases that looked like camera and video equipment boxes. All very precious and original thinking.

Generally, the visitors to the exhibition commented upon the active and maximum involvement of young female artists who had romanticized with colour and fabric and a whole lot of media. The whole exhibition was an amalgam of expressions and reactions towards the current situation of war, and overlying terrorism with ideas that were softened by the installations. No doubt, a soothing alternative from the radical and drastic statements, actions and opinions one observes today coming from different people at various levels, after the eleventh September and the later tragedies.

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The colours of October

Art
REVIEWS

Marjorie Husain

As if to offer respite from the tragic world events that dominate our thoughts, artists and galleries in Karachi displayed an array of colour rich artworks to gladden the observer's eye. Viewing the impeccable collections one lauded the optimism of the artist and left the exhibition with a lighter heart. On view were recent paintings by Qudsia Nisar at Jahanzeb Art Gallery, Ahmed Zoay at Chawkandi Art, Ather Jamal at Clifton Art Gallery, and Chitra Pritam at Momart: all of these artists with admired, signature styles.

Qudsia, a prolific abstract expressionist, employs mixed media to enhance her renowned watercolour style. Her idiom is a variable alphabet of lines, curves, dots and marks. Currently she is showing exhibits from two sequences: 'Footprints' in which she recalls numerous journeys she has travelled both east and west, and 'Human Fate', a series that examines with ironic humour the unexpected twists and turns of individual lives. Qudsia whose first solo exhibition in 1973 contrived a collection of paintings titled 'Voyages', captured the attention of the media and public alike when she emerged on the scene. A phenomenon that has not changed. She was one of the vanguard of strong women painters who established their reputations in the city in the '70s and '80s, many of them taking on the responsibility of running art institutes in Karachi. Qudsia's has been a notable contribution to modern art and its propagation.

Ahmed Zoay's work at Chawkandi was impressive, showing a selection of powerful figurative works in brilliant colour combinations. His subject appeared to paraphrase figures found in classic miniature pieces, but slightly 'off-key' as if contrasting yesterday's traditions with today's lost norms. Although the artist has touched a number of subjects since his paintings were first seen in Karachi in 1970, his bold use of

colour is an on-going device that endows his work with continuity.

Ather Jamal is one of Karachi's most renowned genre watercolourists. His subjects vary from the classic schools of landscape and still life, to portraits emphasizing regional costumes and jewellery. The artist's collection of paintings, on display at the Clifton Art Gallery, delighted admirers of his work for the superb brushwork and brilliant colouration employed. In several pieces Jamal achieved opaque affects using stronger colours than in previous collections, at the same time evoking light from surfaces with a transparent watercolour technique. The artist achieves traditional paintings in a modern format that is particularly noticeable in the abstract backgrounds that enhance his subject.

Working in the same vein as Ather Jamal, Chitra Pritam exhibited prime examples of his signature work: rural Punjab, the tomb of the holy man Musa Nawab which lies close to his ancestral village in Sadiqabad. There are Karachi scenes of boats and sea, the movement of water seen at various times of day or night, are the work of an assured artist. Naqsh taught Chitra how to use the media, but the artist's talent is inherent. Chitra paints with oils, rich, textured pieces that capture the reality of the subject, the heat haze of summer, shade of a tree and the slow plod of cattle moving towards home. He has also displayed a series of experiments with gestural calligraph-art, layers of paint creating tactile interest. Chitra's work is at its best on a grand scale showing a panoramic landscape, contained in an important frame. These are pieces for museums and very large offices.

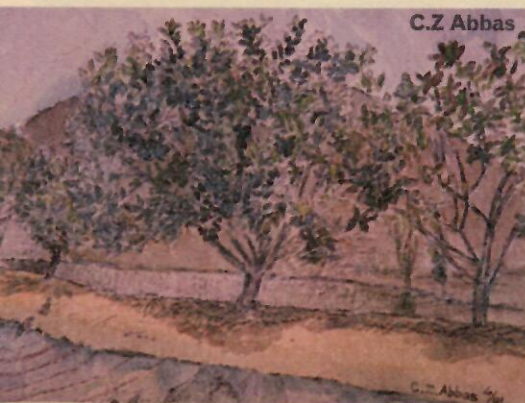
C. Z. Abbas showed a collection of the work she produced on a recent visit to Jamaica. The veteran watercolourist paints whatever pleases her eye, whether focusing on views of the Blue Mountains, or a flower arrangement against a pile of books. Chris's interior views are of homes that are loved and used, there are invariably mugs partially seen and paperbacks waiting to be read. She expressed the desire to paint the beauty spots of Pakistan in her unmistakable, soft edged style. Perhaps when the time is right one may approach the Pakistan National Council of the Arts with their links to tourism, to facilitate the octogenarian artist.



Chitra Pritam



Qudsia Nisar



C.Z. Abbas

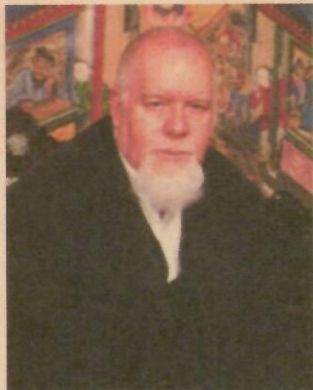


Ather Jamal



Ahmed Zoay

An on-going icon... Peter Blake



This month I would like to profile the British artist Peter Blake, a genius who has retained the vision of a child and is also a very nice guy to know. Peter is well known in international art circles as a collagist, collector, painter and printmaker. Born in Kent in 1932, he was an icon of pop art in the 1960s and confirmed his creativity and

popularity through successive generations. As curator and organiser of this year's Annual Summer Exhibition held at the Royal Academy of Art, he endowed the event with a gentle, fun filled flavour of his own.

An extraordinary man, in spite of his celebrated art status, Blake is genial, unassuming, with a youthful image that belies his years. His career, crossing many decades, continues to find new direction. As a student he attended the Gravesend Art School, travelling each day from his home in Dartford. There was a junkyard that ran along Gravesend station with an array of weird articles juxtaposed in heaps that fascinated the art student and initiated his famous interest in collecting objects of all kinds. Blake's first buy was a complete set of Shakespeare in a leather binding. "It felt like buying a library". He followed up by buying a primitive painting of Queen Mary, and a papier-mache tray. In 1953, he began his studies at the Royal Academy of Art. Here he began to develop a new, figurative style of painting, often tinged with nostalgia for childhood that blended motifs from popular culture and fine art.

Considered by many to be the most innovative collagist of his time, Blake considers that collage may consist of two or three dimensions, and may encompass anything that "finds something attached to something else. Books, embroidery, applique, clothes, furniture... even music". One of his signature pieces from 1962, *The Toy Shop*, is now in the collection of the Tate Gallery. It evokes the essence of Blake's work consisting of a quaint, old fashioned panelled door and window display fronting a toyshop containing children's playthings from the 1930s, tin aeroplanes, cars, marbles, tiny dolls and a myriad small objects.

Blake's first solo exhibition was held in 1962. As his reputation grew, he taught extensively at various art colleges, and in 1964, started teaching at the Royal Academy of Art, where he remained until 1974.

Throughout the '80s, Blake simultaneously worked on collages and constructions as well as more formal paintings, prints and watercolours. During the '90's he continued to pursue a range of projects and his collection expanded. It is now stored in his studio; a converted

Georgian stable that he moved into in 1997. In '98, he was made an Honorary Doctor of the Royal College of Art, and in the following year a selection of his enormous collection was exhibited at the Morley Gallery, London, titled: 'A Cabinet of Curiosities from the Collections of Peter Blake'.

After concluding two years as an Associate Artist National Gallery, Blake decided to emotionally retire from the art world.

"I realised that, in theatre terms, my exhibition called: *Now We Art 64*', was probably the finale of my career as an artist. I would never show in a better gallery, or produce as much work in a set period again.

Most of my ambitions had been achieved and those that hadn't were not likely to be. I was coming up to the age of 65 when most men retire, I would retire from the Art World. After the finale could come a number of encores..."

Blake's 'encores' continue: a retrospective of prints at the Peter Gywther Gallery, an exhibition of his prized collection. The third in a series of exhibitions: 'About Collage', followed, and further projects planned. Before the closure of the Annual Summer Exhibition, Blake had already begun to develop ideas for new work. He has always aspired to extend the limits of collage to exceed the concept of works on paper, a goal fulfilled beyond his expectations. ♦



On the Balcony 1955-7



The Toy Shop 1962

Why America must stop the War now

Brutality smeared in peanut butter

Arundhati Roy

As darkness deepened over Afghanistan on October 7, the US government, backed by the International Coalition Against Terror (the new, amenable surrogate for the UN), launched air strikes against Afghanistan. TV channels lingered on computer-animated images of cruise missiles, stealth bombers, Tomahawks, "Bunkerbusters" and Mark 82 high dragbombs. All over the world, little boys watched goggle-eyed and stopped clamouring for new video games.

The UN, now an ineffective acronym, wasn't even asked to mandate the strikes. (Madeleine Albright once said, "We will behave multilaterally when we can, and unilaterally when we must." "Evidence" against the terrorists was shared among friends in the "coalition".

After conferring, they announced that it didn't matter whether or not the "evidence" would stand up in a court of law. Thus, in an instant, were centuries of jurisprudence carelessly trashed.

Nothing can excuse or justify terrorism, whether religious fundamentalists, private militias, people's resistance movements, or whether dressed up as a war of retribution by a recognised government. The bombing is not revenge for September 11. It is another act of terror against the people of the world.

Each innocent person killed must be added to, not set against, the grisly toll of civilians who died on September 11. People rarely win wars, governments rarely lose them. People get killed.

Governments moult and regroup,

hydra-headed. They use flags first to shrink-wrap minds and smother thought, and then as ceremonial shrouds to bury the willing dead. On both sides, in Afghanistan as well as the US, civilians are now hostage to the actions of their own governments.

Ordinary people in both countries share a common bond—they have to live with the phenomenon of blind, unpredictable terror. Each batch of bombs dropped on Afghanistan is matched by an escalation of US mass hysteria about anthrax, hijackings and other terrorism.

There is no easy way out of the spiralling morass of terror and brutality confronting the world today. It is time the human race holds still, delves into its wells of collective wisdom, both ancient and modern. What happened on September 11 changed the world forever. Freedom, progress, wealth, technology, war - all have taken on new meaning.

Governments have to acknowledge this transformation, and approach their new tasks with a modicum of honesty and humility. Unfortunately, there has been no sign of introspection from the International Coalition. Or the Taliban.

When he announced the air strikes, President Bush said: "We're a peaceful nation." America's favourite ambassador, Tony Blair, (who also holds the portfolio of UK Prime Minister), echoed him: "We're a peaceful people."

So now we know. Pigs are horses. Girls are boys. War is peace.

Speaking at FBI headquarters a few days later, Bush said: "This is our calling. This is the calling of the USA. The most free nation in the world. A

nation built on fundamental values that reject hate, reject violence, reject murders and reject evil. We will not tire."

Here is a list of countries the US has been at war with, and bombed, since World War II: China (1950-3), Korea (1950-3) Guatemala (1954, 1967-9), Indonesia (1958), Cuba (1959-60), Congo (1964), Peru (1965), Laos (1964-73), Vietnam (1961-73), Cambodia (1969-70), Grenada (1983), Libya (1986), El Salvador and Nicaragua (1980s), Panama (1989), Iraq (1991-9), Bosnia (1995), Sudan (1998), Yugoslavia (1999). Now Afghanistan.

Certainly it does not tire - this, the most free nation in the world.

What freedoms does it uphold? Within its borders, the freedoms of speech, religion, thought; of artistic, expression, food habits, sexual preferences (well, to some extent) and many other exemplary, wonderful things.

Outside its borders, the freedom to dominate, humiliate and subjugate usually in the service of its real religion, the "free market". So when the US government christens a war "Operation Enduring Freedom", we in the Third World feel more than a tremor of fear. Because we know Enduring Freedom for some means Enduring Subjugation for others.

The International Coalition Against Terror is a cabal of the world's richest countries. Between them, they manufacture and sell almost all the world's weapons, possess the largest stockpile of weapons of mass destruction - chemical, biological and nuclear. They have fought the most wars, account for most of the genocide, subjection, eth-

nic cleansing and human rights violations in modern history, and have sponsored, armed and financed untold numbers of despots. Between them, they have almost deified, the cult of violence and war. For all their appalling sins, the Taliban just aren't in the same league.

The Taliban were compounded in the crumbling crucible of rubble, heroin and landmines in the backwash of the Cold War. Its oldest leaders are in their early 40s. Many are disfigured and handicapped, missing an eye, an arm or a leg. They grew up in a society scarred and devastated by war.

Between the USSR and over 20 years, about \$45bn worth of arms and ammunition was poured into Afghanistan. The latest weapon was the only shard of modernity to intrude upon a thoroughly medieval society.

Young boys, many of them orphans, who grew up in those times, had guns for toys, never knew the security and comfort of family life, never experienced the company of women. Now, as adults and rulers, the Taliban beat, stone and brutalise women, they don't seem to know what else to do with them.

Years of war stripped them of gentleness, inured them to kindness and human compassion. Now they've turned their monstrosity on their own people. They dance to the percussive rhythms of bombs raining down around them.

With all due respect to Bush, the people of the world do not have to choose between the Taliban and the US government. All the beauty of civilisation - our art, our music, our literature - lies beyond these two fundamentalist, ideological poles. There is as little chance the people of the world can all become middle-class consumers as there is that they will all embrace any one religion. The issue is not as much about good v evil or Islam v Christianity as about space. About how to accommodate diversity, contain the impulse towards hegemony, whether economic, military, linguistic, religious and cultural.

Any ecologist will tell you how dan-

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gerous and fragile a monoculture is. A hegemonic world is like having a government without a healthy opposition. It becomes a kind of dictatorship. It's like putting a plastic bag over the world, and preventing it from breathing. Eventually, it will be torn open.

One and a half million Afghans died in the 20 years of conflict preceding this new war. Afghanistan was reduced to rubble, which is now being pounded into finer dust. By the second day of bombing, pilots were returning to base without dropping their bombs. As one pilot put it, Afghanistan is "not a target - rich environment". At a press briefing at the Pentagon, US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was asked if America had run out of targets. "First we're going to re-hit targets," he said, "and second, we're not running out of targets, Afghanistan is..." This was greeted with gales of laughter.

By the third day, the US Defence Department boasted it had "achieved air supremacy over Afghanistan" (Did they mean they had destroyed both, or maybe all 16 of Afghanistan's planes?)

On the ground in Afghanistan, the Northern Alliance, the Taliban's old enemy, and thus the coalition's newest friend, is pushing to capture Kabul. (For the archives, let it be said that the

Alliance's track record is not very different from the Taliban's. But for now, because it's inconvenient, that little detail is being glossed over.) The visible, moderate, "acceptable" leader of the alliance, Ahmed Shah Masud, was killed in a suicide-bomb attack on September 9. The rest of the Alliance is a brittle confederation of brutal warlords, ex-communists and unbending clerics. It is a disparate group divided along ethnic lines, some of whom have tasted power.

Until the US air strikes, the Alliance controlled about five percent of the country. Now, with the coalition's help and "air cover", it is to topple the Taliban. Love is hate, north is south, peace is war.

Among the global powers, there is talk of "putting in a representative government". Or, on the other hand, of 'restoring' the kingdom of Afghanistan's 87-year-old ex-king Zahir Shah, in exile in Rome since 1973. That's the way the game goes-support Saddam Hussein, then "take him out"; finance the *mujahideen*, then bomb them to smithereens; put in Zahir Shah and see if he'll be a good boy. (Is it possible to "put in" a representative government? Can you place an order for democracy, with extra cheese and jalapenos?)

Reports are trickling in about civilian casualties, about cities emptying out as civilians flock to the borders which have been closed. Main arterial roads have been blown up or sealed off. Those who have experience of working in Afghanistan say that by early November, food convoys will not be able to reach the millions of Afghans (7.5m, according to the UN) who run the very real risk of starving to death this winter. They say that in the days left before winter sets in, there can either be a war, or an attempt to reach food to the hungry. Not both.

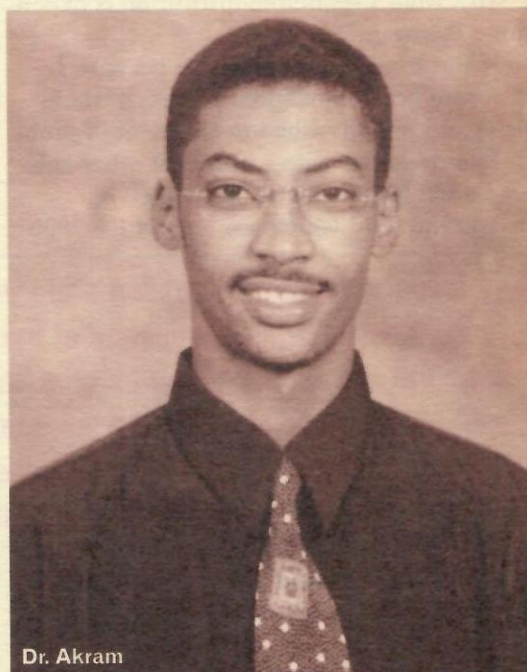
As a gesture of humanitarian support, the US government air-dropped 37,000 packets of emergency rations into Afghanistan. It says it plans to drop a total of 500,000, that will still only add up to a single meal for 500,000 of the several million in dire

Foreign Students in Pakistan

Erum Ali & Adnan S. Paracha



Dr. Hiya Hashim



Dr. Akram

Lebaun Sutohirito, Mohammed Elamin, Dr. Akram and Dr. Hiya Hashim are just some of the many foreigners studying in Karachi's educational institutions. They speak of their life and experiences here.

A visit to the renowned educational institutions in Karachi such as the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), the University of Karachi (KU), Dow Medical College and others, would indicate that many foreign students are enrolled in courses there, most of them residing in the hostel facilities provided by the respective educational institute. The serenity that prevails within the campus enables them to study peacefully away from the bustling city life and achieve their targets for which they have left their homelands and loved ones. No matter how much we criticize the existing educational system, the fact remains that higher education in Pakistan is much better and more affordable than in many

African countries. Our degrees are recognized all over the world and graduates from Pakistan are able to get jobs, everywhere.

Lebaun Sutohirito, born and bred in Mombasa, Africa, came to Pakistan six years ago to do his Masters in Business Administration (MBA). He has recently graduated and is all set to head back to his home and serve his country. "I shall be leaving in a couple of days," Lebaun informs us enthusiastically. Tall and lean Lebaun gives the impression of a perfect businessman all set to cut any deal that life may offer. "I achieved what I came for and now I am ready to go back." He does not intend to stay and work in Pakistan. "No way!" he says fer-



A REFLECTION OF FASHION

The splendid Institute of Fashion Design transports you into the exquisite world of haute couture

Shehla K. Fatah

Photography: Shamy! Khuhro

As you cross the congested Metro Shopping Mall on main Clifton Road, Karachi you would never expect to see a fashion school housed in its premises. Outside on the road there are vendors selling kitchen utensils, wrought iron candle stands, popcorns or chips right in the middle of the side lane where it is impossible to park the car. The shopping Centre is loaded with fabrics made in Pakistan and Japan, and if

there is an urgent need to buy something that is not available at other malls in the city, Metro is the place to be.

However, if you wish to see a place worth visiting,

styled in accordance with international standards, that too is only at Metro, but up on the second floor. This is the Asian Institute of Fashion Design. Constructed over an area of 15000 sq.ft, it houses 5

Purpose built cafeteria

