

# commentary

from other pens...

## Attacks change immigration debate

By Will Lester

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Last month's terrorist attacks abruptly halted the political debate over proposals to legalize millions of undocumented immigrants and brought calls in Congress for tougher immigration rules. That shift delays consideration of a centerpiece of the Republican campaign to win support among Hispanics.

The GOP is relying on various issues to gain support in the nation's fastest growing ethnic group. But no issue is more powerful than broadening immigration. That debate has been turned upside down.

Before the attacks, the Bush administration's efforts were focused on how to achieve more orderly, legal immigration, how to legalize millions of undocumented immigrants and how to bolster their legal rights. The debate is now focused on how to increase border security to keep terrorists out and how to strengthen law enforcement's ability to identify, detain and deport those who are a threat.

"The momentum toward immigration reform is halted," said Antonio Gonzalez, president of the William C. Velasquez Institute in San Antonio, Texas.

Both parties' campaigns for Hispanic support are moving ahead. President Bush had a White House reception Friday to celebrate Hispanic heritage and the Republican National Committee started planning this week for more community "team leader" meetings that recruit Hispanics to their cause. Democrats are working with the Hispanic congressional caucus on economic programs targeted to Hispanics and working with Democrats in governors' races in Virginia and New Jersey.

Sharon Castillo, a spokeswoman for the RNC's outreach effort, said GOP positions on education and tax cuts remain popular among Hispanics and will be a central focus of recruiting efforts. She acknowledged that the momentum for more accessible legal immigration has been delayed, though the administration remains committed in the longterm to its immigration goals.

Republicans are optimistic they can make progress winning over a fast-growing group identified as crucial to the future health of their party. Bush got 35 percent of the Hispanic vote in 2000 and the GOP has been determined to build on that with immigration overhaul as a centerpiece.

"These 30 days have changed everything for the time being," said Al Cardenas, chairman of the Florida GOP. "From a political perspective, I think it's more favorable than unfavorable."

"The Bush folks have been masterful at guarding against a backlash against immigrants in general and Arabs in particular," said Rick Swartz, a political consultant who works on immigration issues.

Like so many political issues, the progress of the anti-terror campaign and the health of the economy will help determine the future of the movement to broaden legal immigration. Robust immigration is crucial for sectors of the economy like the service industries and agriculture.

The current emphasis on security could lead to more efforts to document those now in the country, but the current climate could have pitfalls for the party in power.

Hispanics are very accepting of the need to improve national security, but a push for too many tough new restrictions on immigration could risk a backlash for those thought to be most responsible, some say.

A majority of Hispanics have supported the Democratic Party in recent years, especially since anti-immigrant measures pushed by conservative Republicans in the early 1990s. President Bush has led GOP efforts to assuage lingering suspicions among Hispanics.

Administration efforts to broaden immigration have slowed for now. "I believe it's going to complicate the Republicans' outreach to the Latino community," said Antonia Hernandez, president and general counsel of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. "With immigration, you hit a home run."

EDITOR'S NOTE — Will Lester covers politics and polling for The Associated Press.

ARIZONA 2001 THE STATE



## Nothing is scarier than the dark

WASHINGTON — The White House has cautioned the TV networks about showing those videotaped messages from Osama bin Laden. The fear is that leaders like bin Laden are sending coded messages to their agents worldwide, including those agents here who are possibly awaiting a go-ahead for further terrorism against America.

My concern is that spiking the tapes will keep Americans from hearing the political appeal bin Laden is making. It's a message we need to hear for the brutal reason that it explains why we're in this war — and why it may last a long time.

It was just after U.S. planes began bombing Taliban forces and terrorist camps in Afghanistan last Sunday that Osama bin Laden gave us his reasons for the horrors of September 11. In a videotape released worldwide, he blamed the U.S. sanctions against Iraq, the Israeli "rampage" in Palestine, and the continued presence of "evil" U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia.

Bin Laden described the World Trade Center horror, which cost roughly 6,000 people their lives, as "the sword (that) fell upon America after 80 years." The reference, I can only assume, was to the Cairo Conference of 1921. That was the meeting in which the British and French carved up Arabia to their liking. It created the modern-day Jordan and made Emir Abdullah its king. It made his brother Feisal King of Iraq, gave the French influence over Syria, and allowed Jewish emigration into Palestine.

The Arab "street" to which bin Laden appeals didn't like that deal in 1921, and doesn't like it now. By playing to Arab resentment over what the West did to Arabia 80 years ago, the terrorist leader is doing just what Adolf Hitler did with the Versailles Treaty: He is basing a diabolic appeal on a legitimate grievance.



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How many Americans even recognize what bin Laden was talking about? A safe answer is "not many."

How many Arab and Islamic TV viewers and newspaper readers understand precisely what bin Laden is talking about? A safe answer is "We'd better find out."

Why? Because this war is not simply about punishment. It's also about deterrence. Either we stop the bombings — or we don't. If we don't stop them, life in America will be very different, and the terrorists of Sept. 11 will have won.

My Webster's defines terrorism as the "use of force or threats to demoralize, intimidate and subjugate." By that standard, the hijackers achieved much of their goal. They managed to ram three of our four hijacked planes into prime targets. They also managed to unsettle this country more than we can measure.

Forty-five percent of those polled told U.S. News & World Report that they could imagine themselves or a loved one being the victim of terrorism

Sixty-one percent said they would "think about what happened on Sept. 11" when they fly on an airplane.

Seventy-four percent said their lives would never get back to the way it was before Sept. 11, while 85 percent said that America would never get back to the way it was.

How does America come back from all this? How

do we avoid a relentless drumbeat of terror and reprisal that could cause more damage to our public confidence? One goal is to keep our heads clear — to know what we're fighting. We need to know what is driving our enemies. We need to know what appeal they are making to the Islamic masses.

But we also need to understand this war for our own history.

Our grandchildren will surely ask us about the World Trade Center. Were its twin towers really the tallest in New York? And why did those Arabs fly those airplanes into them, blow them up and kill all those people?

What will be our answer? That bad people — the "evildoers" — did it? That story may work for the toddlers. But what will we tell the older kids?

And how will we explain this war on terrorism of the early 21st century? We know its "immediate cause": the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. What will the history books say were the "long-term" causes?

Those demonstrators in the streets of Karachi and Jakarta are burning with rage at the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan. Why don't they sympathize with us? Why don't they understand that a country that loses 6,000 in a terrorist attack needs to pursue justice?

The sooner we get to the bottom of that question, the sooner we will know what we're up against. And the sooner we know that, the sooner we can get used to living in this world.

Nothing is scarier than the dark. Let's stop living in it.

Chris Matthews, a nationally syndicated columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle, is host of "Hardball" on CNBC and MSNBC cable channels. The 1999 edition of "Hardball" was published by Touchstone Books.

## Peace movement left out in the cold

One casualty of Sept. 11, The New York Times tells us, is "the prospect of a unified left." This may seem less than tragic, but try to picture the political pathos: There they were — labor leaders, student activists, anti-globalists, Hillary Clinton — all coming together to do political battle when a real war came along and ruined everything.

Where there was once an emerging "liberal coalition" just waiting to take back the House of Representatives and maybe even the White House, there are now opposing factions: the so-called "anti-terrorist left" and (no, not the pro-terrorist left) "the embattled new peace movement."

Embattled? It wishes. If college campuses are any measure, one of the problems the "new" peace movement faces — and there are many (more on that below) — is closer to neglect than embattlement. Take Wesleyan, where students recently staged a daylong "teach-in/walkout" to "voice their concerns," as the college newspaper put it, "with the United States military action against the Taliban." Problem was, the students were unable to muster enough concern for the Taliban (voiced or not) for a scheduled march through the Connecticut campus. It was canceled.

Down the highway at Yale, a "speak-out" drew only what the college daily called a "small group" — although participants get points for being "solemn and intellectual." These Yale Coalition for Peace-niks also "voiced their concerns," including: a lack of information; general apathy on campus; no one noticing the white armbands they made themselves from old sheets. "Hopefully, activists will start becoming active," said coalition member Dalton Jones. That's not all. "Some mentioned that the media have provided few images of the destruction in Afghanistan, and no Afghan victim biographies, though both were available about the Sept. 11 attacks." Wait until Oliver Stone hears about this.

So much for Yale. Things were no better at Brown, naturally. There, students participated in a "class walkout" (not to be confused with a "speak-out" or "teach-in/walkout") sponsored by a group rather impressively named Not Another Victim Anywhere (NAVA). The walkout turnout was sparse enough to have prompted a participating English professor named William Keach to say, "The anti-war movement may seem like a small voice now, but it will continue to grow in the days



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and weeks to come."

Why? What exactly does it have to say? So far either not much or too much. That is, it's either the empty jargon of students about "organizing for peace" and "laying the groundwork for real solutions," as NAVA's Shaun Joseph put it, or it's just an open vein of professorial vitriol. It's either students cutting out flocks of paper doves at Colorado University (please!), or it's University of Texas professor Robert Jensen writing that the Sept. 11 massacre "was no more despicable than the massive acts of terrorism ... that the U.S. government has committed during my lifetime." It's University of Indiana students rushing out on Day 1 of the bombing campaign to pitch a "Peace Camp," or it's Professor Keach comparing the massacre of Sept. 11 with the Gulf War. "I was cheering when the Pentagon got hit," Peter Zedrin of Providence told Brown students, "because I know about the brutality of the military. The American flag is nothing but a symbol of hate and should be used for toilet paper for all I care."

Nice, balanced, enlightening talk like this deeply bothered some students, much to their credit, but it doesn't seem to stop. Berkeley demonstrators wave placards with such slogans as, "The U.S.A. is still the world's greatest terrorist." CCNY professor Walter Daum blames "American imperialism" for the Sept. attack, while international studies professor Marina Fernando blames "the blood lust [in America] that follows" the attack for the plight of Afghan refugees.

Blood lust? More than 5,000 Americans died on Sept. 11 — and more than 500,000 might have died if the hijackers had packed a small nuclear device in their carry-on luggage. In seeking to prevent future massacres, President Bush isn't leading a reluctant nation onto, say, an ideological battleground in a distant proxy state: He's trying to save the country.

This war came to Lower Manhattan and Arlington, Virginia. And when firemen and receptionists

and bankers and busboys die on the job by the thousands in their own hometowns, the abstract, philosophical point of departure for American peace movements dies with them. That notion probably accounts for the shallow reach of the hollow rhetoric, whether acid or fatuous. The urgent question before us is not whether we should prosecute a war against Islamist terrorism, but how to win it. Too bad they won't be studying that in school.

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### berry's world



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