

# commentary

from other pens...

## Turkey back policy, hopes for payback

By George Gedda

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — There is a decidedly Christian profile to the countries that have contributed or pledged military forces to the global anti-terrorism campaign: Britain, France, Canada, Italy, Germany, Australia and New Zealand, besides the United States itself. The one notable exception is overwhelmingly Muslim Turkey.

Defying public opinion at home and sentiment in most Muslim countries, Turkey has offered about 90 special forces to assist in the effort to bring down the terrorist infrastructure in Afghanistan.

Turkey hopes the offer will provide some leverage in its quest for help in revitalizing its economy and in combating terrorist threats of its own. “We have a number of expectations,” admits Turkish ambassador Faruk Logoglu.

The Turkish offer came as manna from heaven for an administration saying daily since Sept. 11 that terrorism has no religion or geography.

Logoglu, in an interview, said the gesture “was not only another link in the chain of support we provided to the U.S. but a significant message to rest of the world that this was not a war on Islam but on terrorism.”

Turkey has also expressed its desire to be part of a future Afghan peacekeeping force. It believes American military planners mapping strategy for the Afghan war can benefit from Turkey’s experience in fighting rebels in its eastern regions.

Other Muslim countries have shown support for the anti-terrorism effort, particularly Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Pakistan — all neighbors of Afghanistan. But unlike Turkey, none has offered troops.

American admiration for Turkey began long before its offer of troops last month. Successive U.S. administrations have held out hope other Muslim countries would follow the Turkish path by embracing secularism and democracy. Thus far there are few takers.

Turkey’s treatment of its restive minority Kurdish population and other rights abuses, however, have blocked the country’s admission to the European Union and have been a sore point for years in its relations with the United States.

Turkey is feeling vulnerable these days on several fronts. Inflation is expected to top 70 percent this year, the lira has been shrinking all year and up to a million Turks have lost their jobs.

Turkey, the lone predominantly Muslim member of NATO, feels slighted by the alliance. Logoglu said Turkish terror groups receive support from the outsiders but contended NATO ignores Turkey’s plight even as the alliance acted with lightning speed on behalf of the United States after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Specifically, the alliance decided to activate Article 5 of the NATO charter, which says an attack on one is an attack on all.

“We, of course, expect the same treatment,” Logoglu says.

Turkey’s decision to send forces to Afghanistan is not without political cost. Perhaps three-quarters of the Turkish population is opposed to the American air strikes on Afghanistan, which began a month ago.

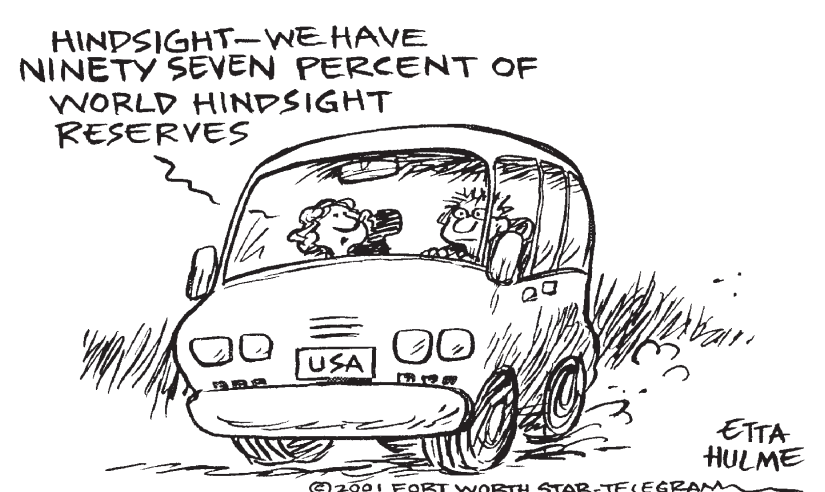
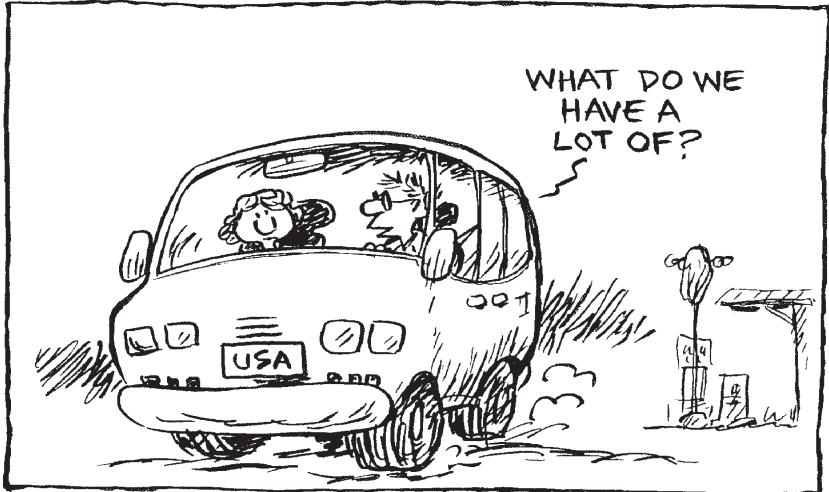
In addition, Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi made clear after talks in Ankara on Tuesday his government’s reservations about Turkey’s troop commitment.

“Let’s leave the solution to the Afghanistan problem to its own people,” he said. “In general, Afghans don’t prefer foreign countries to interfere with their business.”

But Turkey insists on being a cog in the anti-terrorism wheel, seeing the crisis as an opportunity to generate good will. Days after the Turkish offer of troops, an International Monetary Fund delegation turned up in Ankara to discuss terms for a possible \$9 billion loan.

Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit told reporters that, regarding loan requests, “friendly and allied countries which recognize Turkey’s importance will, of course, take Turkey’s needs into consideration.”

EDITOR’S NOTE — George Gedda has covered foreign affairs for The Associated Press since 1968.



## Time to capture bases for ground war

After nearly four weeks of bombing, it’s time for the United States to help anti-Taliban rebels seize some ground in Afghanistan, according to one of America’s foremost academic experts on that country.

“We need to be inside Afghanistan conducting guerrilla raids — not just bombing from a safe distance,” said Professor Thomas Gouttierre of the University of Nebraska at Omaha’s Center for Afghanistan Studies.

Promising targets include not only the northern town of Mazar-e-Sharif, a much-publicized objective of the Northern Alliance, but also the large Shinand airfield near the northwestern city of Herat, which is under attack by forces under rebel leader Ismael Khan.

The Pentagon announced Tuesday that U.S. ground forces are assisting the Northern Alliance, but other experts say that, so far, Khan is getting no aid from the United States.

In an interview, Gouttierre said the United States should try to win support among Afghan groups by offering weapons and money and by making it clear that their country will be rebuilt after the war and that its post-Taliban government will not be dominated by Pakistan.

“They are all sticking their fingers in the wind to see which trends are building,” Gouttierre said, referring to Afghanistan’s disparate ethnic leaders. “They are waiting to see how committed we are going to be.”

Although elite opinion in Washington, both liberal and conservative, is beginning to question the Bush administration’s war plans, Gouttierre said, “It’s premature to say it’s not working. We didn’t have plans in place on Sept. 11.”

A colleague of Gouttierre’s, former U.S. Ambassador Peter Tomsen, said U.S. bombing has weakened the Taliban and predicted that “If we handle this right, we could win in the North by the start of Ramadan (Nov. 17) and defeat the Taliban by the



### morton kondracke

● commentary

end of the year.”

Tomsen was the U.S. special envoy to Afghanistan from 1989 to 1992 and is now ambassador in residence at the center Gouttierre heads.

A former Peace Corps volunteer and graduate student in Afghanistan, Gouttierre speaks two Afghan languages and was a United Nations political officer there from 1996 to 1997.

With liberals in Washington calling for a bombing halt to avoid civilian casualties, and conservatives pressing for ground troops and intensified bombing, Gouttierre and Tomsen recommend a third course: less bombing of civilian areas and more Special Forces to equip Afghan rebels and go on raids with them to rout out Osama bin Laden’s Al-Qaeda organization and the Taliban regime.

“Bombing civilian areas is a public relations disaster,” Tomsen said. Gouttierre suggested that bombing during Ramadan be limited to “pinpoint attacks against Taliban military targets” and close air support of anti-Taliban rebels.

“We don’t want to repeat the mistakes of the Russians by just bombing from a distance,” Gouttierre said. “We have the advantage of not wanting to occupy the country. We need to make allies and be better guerrillas than the Taliban.”

As a first step, he said, the United States should help the Northern Alliance capture Mazar-e-Sharif and help Ismael Khan capture Shinand.

Khan, an ethnic Tajik, was a leading commander in the war against the Soviet Union who later resisted the Taliban. They captured him, but he escaped and now is leading a rebellion that’s captured the Northwest province of Ghor, near Herat.

## The cat would hate walking on 16th Street Mall

Walking is different in Denver. Not the altitude, but the attitude. When I go walking at night in Oberlin, I take the dog.

She spends her days running back and forth in her pen, trying to catch the birds that fly over, so she gets plenty of exercise. But she does like to get out and stretch her legs. And my arms.

Taking the dog means taking the cat. Molly is quite attached to the dog, and she seldom misses a night walk (She won’t go during the day; too many cars, people, dogs and other cats out.)

Molly has a ritual she does when we are about to go for a walk. She comes down off the deck onto the patio, rubs the chairs, then rolls in the dust, while I am getting Annie out of the pen and putting on her leash.

By the time Annie is ready, Molly is done with her little dance and ready to romp off down the street.

Our walks in Oberlin are peaceful. Late at night, it’s rare to meet anyone else. Maybe an enemy cat or two, but Annie is good at sending them away.

Denver is a different story. After a stressful day and a big meal Saturday, I needed to walk. I set the timer on my watch and took off down the 16th Street Mall.

You see things you’d never see in Oberlin. Traffic, of course. Lots of people. There are kids hanging together, couples out on the town, workers going to and from their jobs. Teen-agers cruising



### steve haynes

● along the sappa

the streets.

And the street people, all kinds of street people. There are beggars and street musicians with cups out. Winos, drunks, people we would have called bums when I was younger. Kids of all sorts: punks, mall rats, toughs, hip-hops, clean kids, incredibly not clean kids. Kids with chains and tattoos and weird hair. Kids looking as normal as yours or mine. Yours, anyway.

They’re all there on the mall, mingling with the squeal of tires and the whine of the electric motors on the free buses.

A couple of years ago, some of the young transients who live on the mall, or nearby, set on some of the winos. They beat them, leaving them dead or dying. There were incidents with tourists and locals.

Today, you don’t see much of that. What you do see is lots of cops. Saturday, there were at least three patrol cars on the mall — marked patrol, unmarked tactical, special detail — plus a couple of motorcycle cops and two bike cops, with flashing red-and-blue tail lights on their mountain bikes.

No one was being bothered, even by the

weirdoes with dirty hair who sat on benches and made loud remarks to whoever was passing by. The tourists and couples and kids seemed to be having a nice time on a warm fall night. There were no hassles, and though the cops stopped now and then to talk with a few kids, no arrests.

It’s a sharp contrast to the downtown Denver that I remember when we moved to Colorado in 1980. Then, you could have staged a war on 16th Street at 10 p.m. on a Saturday night and not hurt anyone. Heck, with the sidewalks rolled up at 7, there wouldn’t have been much damage.

Today, downtown Denver is a thriving place. It makes for more interesting walking than downtown Oberlin at 10 p.m. on a Saturday. But I’m not moving.

Most of the time, I like peace and quiet. And the cat would hate walking in Denver.

### berry’s world



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