

## US, Iraq and Israel: Bush's unreal war



ARSHAD-UZ ZAMAN

through their long history have hit a new low since 11 September 2001. For months US high level representatives tried their utmost to drag Turkey into war against Iraq. The pointsman was Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy US Defence Secretary, who made many trips to Ankara. The Turks were enticed with offer of cash so that US troops could start operations from the north and enter Iraq. The Turkish Parliament voted down the proposal.

Thus President Bush had an

the world. They are even more remarkable in the US, in Britain, Australia and Spain. Mercifully for the US there is CNN and BBC to back up the war effort through their global propaganda machine. Unfortunately they have practiced the overkill and people are looking for other sources of information.

The US with its vast machine has attempted to cajole and browbeat governments throughout the world to toe their line. Yet there are signs that more and more governments are entering the waverers

was receiving a visitor much too frequently named Ariel Sharon. Bush was surrounded by high ranking advisers, who professed the faith of Sharon. The powerhouse of Bush was the US Congress. And the powerhouse of tiny Israel was the US Congress. How many congressmen are there, who will not make a dutiful pilgrimage to Israel before facing the voters in the US? Of course Israel has other weapons at her command, namely the media, the Wall Street and numerous other pockets of power. It is Sharon, who must have persuaded Bush to target Saddam Hussein, 'the dictator', the 'mass murderer' etc. Sharon must have used the argument that he owed it to his father, senior Bush, the President of the nineties, to finish the unfinished task of finishing off Saddam. For Sharon the calculation is simple enough. In 1979 through the Camp David Peace Accord, the most formidable Arab adversary of Israel, namely Egypt was neutralized. Iraq remained the most dangerous enemy, with nuclear ambitions.

While launching into the Iraq adventure President Bush did not take into consideration some basic ground realities. It is a different world compared to the time of his father. Lately Iraq has committed no sin to invite the kind of aggression unfurling before our eyes. Since 11 September 2001, the US, although retaining her preeminence as the number one power of the world has lost her superpower status.

column. We must not forget that nothing succeeds like success but nothing fails like failure.

How did President Bush blunder into this war? The war has been opposed by mighty voices of the world including the Pope. President Bush entered the White House in January 2001 after an election that left a bad taste in the mouth. The much vaunted champion of democracy in the world appeared to have failed the test. The presidency of Bush limped along until 11 September 2001, when the US was hit for the first time in her 200 plus years history within her own territory. President Bush took some time to recover from the blow. He, however, seized upon the opportunity to strike at the Taliban in faraway Afghanistan and thus started a crusade against terrorism worldwide.

Terrorism was too nebulous a target to retain the attention of President Bush. President Bush

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## Nuclear non-proliferation: An ominous twist in the offing?



DILARA CHOUDHURY

A new and ominous twist with regard to nuclear non-proliferation seems to be in the offing. Washington is calling for a new generation of nuclear weapons including bunker-busting bombs--bombs that would be specially designed to penetrate deep underground and eviscerate enemy command and control centres, ammunition dumps and secret leadership hideouts--apparently to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Till date the strategies in tackling the nuclear non-proliferation issue has been dealt with through various bilateral and multilateral treaties as well as bilateral and multilateral negotiations. This is evident by the way Washington previously acted or took steps in order to advance non-proliferation, which has been at the top of its foreign policy agenda since 1960s, both at the global and regional level.

History bears evidence that the agenda of nuclear non-proliferation was set on firm grounds due to a consensus among the elite nuclear weapons states (NWSs) and a number of slow but steady arms reduction treaties (SALT-I and SALT-II) between the United States and the erstwhile Soviet Union during 1960s and 1990s that downsized nuclear warheads between the two and established Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Programme to improve nuclear safety and security in former Soviet Union. They raised hopes for eventual global nuclear disarmament and demonstrated US's commitment to encourage non-nuclear states not to go for nuclearization. Strategies undertaken in order to contain the regional proliferation consisted a number of multilateral treaties like Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and UN regimes like International Atomic Energy Agency, Missile Technology. At the national level, Washington initiated law that automatically punished potential proliferators with economic sanctions. It also worked diligently for the resolution of regional conflicts -- the *raison d'être* for nuclearization. These strategies were partially successful as evidenced by the swelling in number of NPT signatories, 'turning around' or reversing the nuclear programmes' by South Africa, Brazil and Argentina and 'nuclear roll back' in Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus.

But its non-proliferation agenda suffered a major set back in two regions. First in South Asia when India and Pakistan went nuclear in 1998 despite Washington's attempts to at least, persuade them to merely 'capping' their respective nuclear programmes from its initial objective to make these South Asian rivals to 'roll back their programmes and then eventually eliminate them' through a policy of reward and punishment. To this end Washington adopted various measures both at the global and domestic levels like tightening of IAEA's inspections, which were ineffective since both India and Pakistan refused to sign NPT. Denial of nuclear fuel and technology through London Suppliers Group was evidently not enough as Islamabad continued to procure the technology through black markets and other means while India's programmes was not affected because it had been indigenous. Washington's diplomatic endeavours to defuse the regional tensions that were thought to be

root cause for South Asia going nuclear were also fraught with difficulties.

Eventually, India detonated nuclear devices -- a suit followed by Pakistan in defiance of US pressure and imposition of economic sanctions. Even during post 1998 period US endeavours to prevent India/Pakistan from development and deployment of nuclear weapons ran into difficulties as evidenced by the refusal by both India and Pakistan to sign CTBT. The

nuclear power plants, allow IAEA inspectors to monitor the Yongbyon reactor and its sealed 8,000 spent fuel rods in return for two modern light-water reactors (it is more difficult to extract plutonium from the spent fuel rods of a light-water reactor), and until the light water reactors were completed by an international consortium Washington was to ship North Korea 50,000 tons of heavy fuel each year.

But a full-fledged crisis has

any justification) on 'high moral grounds.' It maintains that as the leader of the globalized world it must have the necessary military capability to deal with countries like Iraq and North Korea whose weapons of mass destruction, pose threat not only to US security interest, but to the peace and stability of the world order as well. But a deeper look reveals that most likely the US is seeking these new generation of nuclear weapons to craft an alternative strategy for nuclear non-proliferation. And in this context its endeavours to procure these nuclear arsenals including nuclear bunker-busting bombs point to a very dismal and disconcerting assumption that in future Washington would use force in order to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons something like Israel did in 1981 when it destroyed Iraq's Osirak nuclear facility through a surprise attack. Will such strategies be successful or welcomed?

We think not. First, in today's interdependent world any efforts of disarmament cannot and should not be done through the use of unilateral force because of the spiraling security consequences, which would threaten the world peace and stability. Multilateralism, diplomacy and negotiations are the only ways for disarmament no matter how difficult they may be. Second, since any country that according to US perception has a secret nuclear programme and, thus, poses threats to it can be a target of Washington's pre-emptive attacks under the September 2002 National Security Strategy; there is a chilling feeling that it may pick and choose a country as per its own vision. For example, both Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice have already accused Iran of making further progress in its alleged nuclear programme in violation of disarmament treaty and UN inspections. Iran denies the allegation but US insists that it does. Does this mean that Iran would be the next target of attack by the US for its nuclear disarmament policy? Who then would be next after Tehran? The very thought is indeed nightmarish. Lastly, Washington seems to miss the point that history bears ample example that use of force is not the solution to every problem, especially when it comes to dealings with nuclear weapons. Forceful disarmament is not the way to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.

Apparently the US justifies the requirement of such unique nuclear arsenal (not that it needs

strategies of reward and punishment, as such, did not work in case of India and Pakistan who are now going ahead with nuclear weapons development and both have now inducted nuclear capable missile into their respective armed forces. At present, the main objective of United States in South Asia is to help and persuade India and Pakistan to have nuclear restraint regimes. The second one is Korean Peninsula where US's non-proliferation policy is confronted with even more serious problems than in South Asia. It is to be noted that with regard to North Korea, Washington's non-proliferation strategies have been similar to those used in case of South Asia. But its policy to persuade North Korea to give up its nuclear programme seems to be in complete shambles. Gone are the days when it was considered that US non-proliferation policy in North Korea was a success and has made major headway with Pyongyang joining NPT and agreeing under the 1994 Agreed Framework that it would abandon its nuclear programme i.e. moth ball its 5-megawatt nuclear reactor at Yongbyon, which was producing nuclear fuel, and discontinue the construction of two (25 and 200) megawatt

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## THE HORIZON THIS WEEK

While launching into the Iraq adventure President Bush did not take into consideration some basic ground realities. It is a different world compared to the time of his father. Lately Iraq has committed no sin to invite the kind of aggression unfurling before our eyes. Since 11 September 2001, the US, although retaining her preeminence as the number one power of the world has lost her superpower status.

inauspicious start of his huge war campaign. He has been frustrated at the Security Council of the UN. All along France, a permanent member of the Council, has taken a principled stand and has clearly opposed US-British proposal of launching a war against Iraq. Another permanent member Russia has joined France and the third permanent member China is inclining in their direction. The diplomatic action, which has revolved around the European Union, has witnessed France and Germany, the two most important members of EU, working in close concert against US-British plans of invading Iraq.

Thus isolation of US has been nearly complete. Minus her loyal ally UK, and to a lesser degree Australia and Spain, she finds herself virtually alone on the world stage. On the popular level the isolation is even more stark. Popular demonstrations against the war have been snowballing throughout

US President George W. Bush blundered into war more than a week ago. From the march of events it would appear that the war is going to be a nasty and long one.

How did President Bush get into this war? For long he hemmed and hawed, threatened Saddam, 'the dictator', accused him of all kinds of villainous acts and finally stuck the epithet of stockpiler of weapons of mass destruction. The Security Council of the UN spent many sleepless nights mulling over the question. Two venerable weapons inspectors Hans Blix of Sweden and El Baradei of Egypt were sent to Iraq, to discover such weapons. To the chagrin of President Bush, the inspectors reported regularly that they were unable to discover any such weapon stashed in some cave of Iraq.

Without as much as assigning any reason President Bush ordered his mighty war machine to launch into action against Iraq taking in tow British Premier Tony Blair and also his protegee John Howard of Australia. One night Baghdad was pulverized and the CNN reporter was so fascinated by the sight that he confessed, 'I have never seen anything like it'.

President Bush has truly blundered into war. He wanted to build a coalition much like his father a decade ago. The cornerstone of that coalition were Saudi Arabia and Turkey, whose territories the Iraqi pipelines pass through. A decade ago these two states in a gesture of solidarity with the US stopped the pipelines from carrying Iraqi oil to world markets. Relations between Saudi Arabia and the US, remarkably warm

## We must keep our dreams alive

REZA HASSAN

ON March 26 32 years ago, a small nation rose from the ashes of tyranny and brutal dictatorship of a regime; then known as East Pakistan they began their armed struggle to become independent Bangladesh. This is the month of renewing the freedom loving spirit of the people in my country. While we are celebrating, another nation named Iraq is soon going to lose its independence and be shackled by a superpower. This is a commentary about a dream written from heart with lots of emotion.

I was hoping against hope that the Iraq war will not break out. My conviction and belief was strong because I could see that more than 2/3 of the world's population were voicing their opposition through protests and mass rally and asking US and Britain not to go to war. But alas! All my hopes have been dashed to the ground. The war has started and entered into the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of it. The human casualties both civilian and military are rising and if the war lingers on, so will be the rise in the numbers of casualties and increased human sufferings particularly of children and women and elderly people.

One of the baggages of my upbringing has been that I am a firm believer in the wisdom and sagacity of humankind. I believe that there is no problem on earth that confronts humankind that cannot be solved through discussions and negotiations. We need only to be honest, upright in our conviction and be committed to world peace. I have been aware of the Iraq problem and was hoping that the matter could be resolved through dialogues and discussions in the UN. I did not consider few mad and crazy individuals would prevail upon the will of the peace loving people of the world. But how naïve I was and completely forgot that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is the will of the lone superpower that determines the future and destiny of the rest of the world. To them "end justifies the means". The Machiavellian doctrine has been re-surfaced. The 20<sup>th</sup> century doctrine of hegemony through conquest and imposing ideological beliefs by force have been replaced in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with fight against "terror" and in the process the rise of the classical connotation "you are either with us or with them". To the few war crazy individuals who have flouted all international laws and world order, it is a just cause.

But as a freedom loving, democratic minded individual, I have a dream shared by many of you, a dream, which is very simple. It is no different than yours. This dream has no colour, race, or religion. It calls for my children to grow in a peaceful world, wants to see myself having a nice job and living happily with my wife and kids, and neighbours. The dream also wanted to see that together in this uni-polar world we are treated equally

and not judged by economic, social or military powers, to see my country together with yours becoming prosperous, to be treated equally and fairly. It is not a big asking. After all God has created you and me as his "best" among all the creations to be happy and live peacefully while seeking His infinite mercy and blessings?

We did not want war. We opted for peace. Then why? Why US and its so called "coalition of the willing" defied the world opinion and went to war? US and Britain has defied the UN and the world opinion out of their sheer might in military and technological power. The US Administration as part of their strategy believes that "pre-emptive" actions post 9/11 would lead not only to destruction of the opponents but also to a world order that will primarily be in line with their global policy of economic dominance and protecting the interest of their few allies. They all do it in the name of democracy and freedom of choice. In the process, they have made the UN irrelevant and a rubber stamp. When I try to analyse the actions of the present US government, I shudder to think what might lie ahead for smaller countries that like to remain peaceful but not necessarily be a poodle of the US government? The world orders that govern the present day activities of the nations and build relationship among states and between states were not built in a year or so. It took humankind hundreds and hundreds of years of efforts. The actions of US and British administration defying the world order cannot be the example. The rational human behaviour at the individual, family, community and state level all over the world cannot be allowed to disintegrate and we cannot allow our dreams to be shattered and go back to a world of "might is right". We need to protect our dreams.

My dreams are kept alive when I see significant numbers of anti-war protests have already taken place in all major capitals of the world including major cities in the US and the numbers are increasing as war prolongs. I am heartened to see that over 80 per cent of the world population and nearly 65 per cent of the American people are against war and do not support the war policies of their government. I am charged emotionally and my dream gets a boost when I see that rather than being tricked by the spin-doctors of the Bush administration, more and more Americans are questioning the policies of their government.

Mother earth is crying today because it is a day of shame and dishonour for the world and more so for the world body UN which was created more than 50 years ago to prevent precisely this kind of arbitrary and gung ho behaviour of superpowers. Shall we talk about the casualties, no? Shall we talk about the human sufferings, which are bound to increase, no? The lone ranger and its cronies do not want to listen to that. But we have to protect our dreams and hence we must protest. Our civilization and the peace loving citizens all over the world are going through a terrible time. But we need to stay together and fight as we have been fighting for the last 50 years against hunger and poverty. We have to stand shoulder to shoulder and say NO to the hegemonic attitudes and behaviour of few countries like US and Britain. We must ask them to stop the war. We must show them (US and British administration) their hypocrisy and unveil their true characters. They must be exposed to show their true intentions! We have to do it for us, for our civilization and for our children. We cannot fail in our duties or else our dreams will die. We cannot let our dreams to die?

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All health information to keep you up to date

### ABC of flatulence

Flatulence may be considered socially unacceptable, but it's actually a sign of a healthy body and diet. Not passing wind can leave you with an uncomfortable feeling, but how much gas is normal?

Some facts about flatulence:

& The average person produces between 400 and 2400 millilitres of wind a day-- that's an average of 1.5 litres, or enough to fill a balloon.

& Men break wind more frequently than women, on average 12 times a day, and women seven.

& When it comes to smell, about half the population produces methane gas, which doesn't smell, the rest produce hydrogen sulphide gas, which is very smelly. It depends on the kind of bacteria in your bowel, which is largely determined by genes, your family and diet.

& Gas is a by-product of the digestive process. As the bacteria in the large intestine breaks down food, it produces different gases -- nitrogen, carbon dioxide, hydrogen, methane and hydrogen sulphide. Much of this is absorbed back into the body; the rest is expelled as flatus.

Foods that can produce more gas:

a. Carbohydrates and foods high in fibre, like bread, potatoes, fruits and vegies.

b. Things like garlic, onions, cabbage, cauliflower, beans, broccoli and even milk can also produce a lot of wind. Some fruit juices can also produce a significant amount of wind.

### Did you know?

In the western world, the incidence of Asthma rose by 42 per cent.

Next: Around the world.