own ideological agendas down our throats, irrespective of the costs in lives lost and in hardships borne. What I am opposed to is the attempt by political hacks like Karl Rove to distract us from a rise in the uninsured, a rise in the poverty rate, a drop in the median income to distract us from corporate scandals and a stock market that has just gone through the worst month since the Great Depression (this was in October 2002). That's what I'm opposed to. A dumb war. A rash war. A war based not on reason but on passion, not on principle but on politics."

While campaigning he went on like a broken record that he would pull combat troops out of Iraq as soon as possible and even set out a 16 month time line and now the clock is ticking. His words from 2002 have not been forgotten and they also point to the fact that he does believe in war, justified wars that is. A war which he seemingly wishes to pursue in Afghanistan and Pakistan as he tries to smoke out Osama and his cronies. While his intentions are clear what is not yet fully understood is how he wishes to go about the war on Al-Qaeda. He has openly stated many times that if push comes to shove he will unilaterally cross the border into Pakistan to fight the terrorists. A statement which caused 'shock and awe' in more ways than one. After years of unilateral and pre-emptive intervention, the new golden boy of international politics was talking up moves that would have Bush proud. When he first made the remarks, people started second guessing him and his foreign policy, in Pakistan the nation was up in arms, but seemingly that was the worst of it. He has pursued that line of thinking and seems set to enter Pakistan to find Bin-Laden, but at what cost?

His moves could derail the very fabric of the subcontinent and in a country that has been through so much recently, Obama could be the straw that breaks its back. The last few weeks the United States have made numerous attacks well inside the Pakistani border and the number of dead and injured has steadily risen. The situation is unacceptable and if Obama has his way it could get a lot worse. This is where he needs to look back at his own words, where a war should be fought not on passion but reason. While the battle for Al-Qaeda may lead into Pakistan, sound reason should prevail and national borders must be respected, anything less the real hypocrisy of American politics will rear its ugly head again.

Obama's swiftness in action with tackling Iraq will also act as sign of his intentions to live up to his presidential promises. The war has been untenable for some time, but does he have the fortitude to call a spade a spade and accept defeat in Iraq and return with America's tail firmly between its legs. On other fronts how he tackles Putin and his puppet Medyevdev will also be crucial in the larger scale of things. Here he will have to undo the work of not one Bush but two. It was widely reported that before the Berlin wall fell, Gorbachev told Bush Sr. that it would come down and all he asked was for NATO not to be expanded. Bush Sr. did the opposite and then Bush Jr. went one step further by seeking to put a missile defense system in Russia's backyard. Sandwiched between the warm ties Clinton shared with Russia, the Bushes have escalated a war type situation with a country that still



While it is true that Obama's election sent positive waves around the globe, after years of failed, faulty and murderous American foreign policy, the new president will have a real job on his hands trying to 'change' America's image to the world.




