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# One year after 9/11

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How much and how far has the world changed since the horrific attacks! President George Bush and his associates think the world has changed dramatically. America declared war on terrorism. In a surgical operation the Coalition Forces led by the US destroyed Afghanistan and ended the Taliban rule. Barbaric bombing by USAF and RAF may have killed hundreds of Taliban and Al-Qaeda fighters, but thousands of innocent Afghan men, women and children were killed as collateral damage. Karzai, a Pushtun, was installed as interim President, but the Pushtun majority is now at the mercy of the Tajik- and Uzbek-dominated Kabul government. The complexion of Afghanistan has changed from an extremist communal to a secular liberal state. But tradition-bound Afghans have yet to accept this. The coalition forces continue to hunt Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and with Pakistan Army assistance in Pakistan's tribal areas.

The world has joined America to fight terrorism. But the evidence of that is only in and around Afghanistan. Ariel Sharon has unleashed his bloodthirsty Zionist Army to gun down, bomb and murder unarmed Palestinians through Palestinian cities and refugee camps. These massacres with the backing of President George Bush and his Administration were intensified since 9/11. Ariel Sharon was breaking every agreement with the Palestinian Authority under Yasser Arafat, but after 9/11 his appetite for Palestinian blood was fueled by the pro-Zionist policies of the Bush Administration.

The other change is enhanced sabre rattling by Bush to replace Saddam Hussain. His declaring Iraq, Iran and North Korea an Axis of Evil; and his zest to attack Iraq is clearly pushing the Middle East "into hell" as stated by Arab League Secretary General Abu Musa. Bush believes, "we are in the throes of world war". Actually, he is pushing the world into world war by his terrorist hysteria. His international agenda is becoming highly suspect with every passing day.

In the Jerusalem Post of September 7, Sholomo Ben-Ami observes that President Bush's claim that "the world has changed completely after September 11 is gross exaggeration. The world before and after September 11 is exactly the same. The problems and

challenges we faced prior to the WTC attack remain as they were: recession, poverty and hunger in an unequal world society; economic and political crisis in South America; global environmental deterioration; the unsolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict; India and Pakistan honing their nuclear swords; Russia's inexorable transformation from a communist dictatorship to an archaic capitalism; the ongoing struggle for power in Iran between conservatives and reformers; Iraq's continued evasion of UN supervision; increasing fundamentalism among millions of Muslims in answer to dictatorship or kingship in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Algeria."

"Europe before and after 9/11 is busy with its own affairs; stabilizing the Euro, expanding the EU and its failed struggle for common foreign policy," Ben Ami adds, "Al-Qaeda is a small terrorist organization, a far cry from the global terrorist superpower the Bush Administration would have us believe."

"For nine months after assuming office, President Bush staggered aimlessly without agenda and direction till September 11. He was unable to present any policy or issue of interest to America or the world. The events of September 9/11 provided him the Godsend crutch of Al-Qaeda."

"From now on the vision was very simple: a return to the Reagan era and its Machiavellian policy of Western democracies versus the evil Soviet empire." The wise Israeli writer has said it all. All Bush has done is to cast Al-Qaeda in the role of the Soviets; basically for political gain.

"The problem is that the two are radically different. Al-Qaeda is not a rotten superpower on the verge of collapse. It is rather a small, largely amorphous body. There is nothing to strike at, nothing to overthrow." Ben Ami should have added that the West, especially the US, refuses to see the excesses of Israel against Palestinians and by India against Kashmiris. The Muslims have been at the receiving end since long. Since 9/11 the way the Palestinians and the Kashmiris are being killed and humiliated should have moved the Western conscience. It has not. For the Muslims, especially Palestinians and Kashmiris, it is a brutal world since 9/11, with no sympathy for their rights and aspirations to live in freedom.