

SEPTEMBER 11: ONE YEAR LATER

Introduction

Focus

The first anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon was commemorated in the United States and other countries. People paused to remember the victims and reflect on the significance of this dramatic event, both in their own lives and in the larger world picture. This *News in Review* report examines the ways in which this tragedy was remembered and its impact on those whose lives were touched by it. This includes the debate on how to account for and confront terrorism, and the chain of events 9/11 triggered. Many effects of 9/11 continue to have an impact on the international scene a year later.

On September 11, 2002, people in many parts of the world paused to remember the terrible events that had occurred in New York City and Washington D.C. just one year before. The anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon was marked by solemn ceremonies attended by prominent political leaders, the families of the victims, and ordinary citizens. For millions who had witnessed the horrors of that day on television, it was also an opportunity to remember and reflect on the significance of this event—the extent to which it had affected both their own lives and the world. People continued to fear the possibility of yet more violent acts to come. Above all, the first anniversary of what some have termed the “post 9/11 world” was a time for an evaluation of the ongoing “war on international terrorism” that U.S. President George W. Bush had declared shortly after the attacks. How much progress had the United States and its allies made in their campaign against terrorism? What would be the international consequences of this war?

In Afghanistan, the first country to be targeted as a state that harboured terrorists after September 11, a shaky new pro-American government was in place after the ouster of the previous unpopular Taliban regime. Unrelenting U.S. bombing of sites considered to be bases of Al Qaeda, the terrorist group believed to be responsible for the attacks, was thought to have weakened the organization’s ability to mount future operations across the globe. But Osama bin Laden, the Saudi-born head of the Al Qaeda network, and the terrorist

leader who had become public enemy number one for the U.S. government and military after September 11, had not been captured. While some claimed he had been killed in the bombing of his remote Afghan headquarters, many believed he was still alive, and regrouping his forces for possible future strikes against the United States.

When he ordered the military action against Afghanistan, Bush made it clear that he was not restricting the war on terrorism to just one country. In a controversial speech delivered to the U.S. Congress a few months after 9/11, he charged a number of countries with being part of an international “axis of evil,” hostile to American interests and intent on promoting terrorism. Bush specifically named Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. While clear evidence of any links between these three states and bin Laden’s group was non-existent, Bush continued his war of words against real or imagined enemies, and by mid-2002 was narrowing his focus to Saddam Hussein’s regime in Iraq. He accused Saddam of manufacturing and developing weapons of mass destruction, including chemical, biological, and possibly even nuclear weapons. Bush declared he was ready to launch a pre-emptive military strike against Iraq, intended both to eliminate these dangerous weapons and to remove Saddam from power. But unlike the Persian Gulf War of 1991, when a U.S.-led coalition headed by Bush’s father had driven Saddam’s invading forces from Kuwait, this prospective military action against Iraq attracted scant international support. Instead, leaders of a number of friendly governments, including

Did you know . . .

The term “axis of evil” was coined by a Canadian—David Frum?

During the 9/11 crisis, 17 Canadian airport towns took in 33 863 stranded passengers? One grateful American passenger welcomed by the people of Lewisporte, Newfoundland, later donated an \$85 000 computer lab to a local school and another \$15 000 to a local church.

Canada, raised many criticisms and reservations about its wisdom and practicality.

On the site of the destroyed World Trade Center, known as “Ground Zero,” thousands of people gathered to commemorate the event and mourn those who lost their lives there. But the first anniversary of the tragedy highlighted an ongoing and sometimes painful debate among New Yorkers and others. What kind of memorial would be most appropriate? Some wanted the twin towers rebuilt, as a symbol of American pride and defiance of international terrorists. Others wanted a monument of some kind erected on the site, but there was a great divergence of opinion as to what kind of structure should be built. A series of sculpted figures, including one of a woman falling to her death from the World Trade Center after jumping out of a window, was the target of considerable criticism. Many felt it was an unseemly depiction of the human suffering of 9/11. Families of the victims believed that they should be granted the final approval of any permanent memorial, but other residents of New York and prominent political figures had their own ideas about how the memory of this horrific event should be preserved for posterity.

As part of the commemoration of the terrorist attacks, there was a great deal

of commentary and speculation about their causes and how future acts of this kind could be prevented. Bush and the mainstream American media claimed that 9/11 was the product of evil men driven by a fanatical religious ideology and intent on doing harm to the United States because it stood for democracy and freedom. On this view, military retaliation was the only thing terrorists respected or understood. For this reason an ongoing war on terrorism, with broad international support, was the best way of confronting it. As Bush stated, in the campaign against terror, “you’re either with us or against us.”

But other world leaders, including Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, took a different and more subtle position on the causes of the problem and how it could best be met. In a CBC interview with Peter Mansbridge that aroused much controversy, Chrétien wondered if the 9/11 attacks might be viewed at least in part as the angry response of the poor countries of the world to real or imagined Western arrogance, exploitation, and domination. While by no means condoning or justifying the acts themselves, Chrétien and others with similar views argued that it was only by identifying their root causes, and working to eliminate them, that the world could truly be made safe from terrorism.

To Consider

1. Why do you think the first anniversary of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, attracted such widespread media attention, especially in Canada and other countries apart from the United States itself?

2. How would you evaluate the success to date of the “war on terrorism” U.S. President George W. Bush declared shortly after the attacks on New York City and Washington D.C.?

3. What kind of monument do you think would be most fitting for the site of the destroyed World Trade Center in New York City?

4. Do you think the United States is justified in planning a military strike against Iraq? Why/why not?

5. How would you summarize the views of President Bush and Prime Minister Chrétien on the causes of terrorism and how Western countries should deal with it? With which view do you agree more, and why?


6. Do you think that September 11, 2001, represents a turning point in world history? Why/why not?

7. How have the events of September 11, 2001, affected you personally?

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Video Review

For a detailed understanding of this story, watch the video report and record your answers to the questions on this and the following pages.

 Sections marked with this symbol indicate content suitable for younger viewers.

1. What were the targets of the four airplanes that terrorists hijacked on September 11, 2001?

2. How many people were killed in the attacks?

3. What political figure read from Abraham Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address" at the memorial service held in New York on September 11, 2002?

4. In what countries besides the United States were ceremonies held to remember those who died on September 11, 2001?

5. Why was the province of Newfoundland and Labrador a focal point for many Canadians' memories on that day?

6. In what ways have the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, affected the lives of ordinary Canadians?

7. What two figures interviewed by Joan Leishman in the video have criticized the federal government's new anti-terrorist legislation?

Cruel Costs

The costs associated with the collapse of the World Trade Towers are staggering. A partial list includes the following:

- \$3.5-billion paid by New York City to clean up the site
- \$5-billion in lost tax revenues for New York city and state
- \$32-billion for insured property damage
- \$7-billion in lost wages
- \$19.5-billion to replace towers and other damaged buildings

Did you know . . .

Although Americans were clearly the targets of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, nationals from more than 80 countries, including 24 from Canada, perished in collapse of the towers?

8. What were the findings of an EKOS opinion poll regarding Canadians' views on how the events of September 11, 2001, affected
- a) their core values
 - b) their attitudes toward Muslims and Arabs

9. Why did U.S. tennis pro Hassan Sader feel humiliated and angry as a result of the treatment he received after September 11?

10. a) What is "racial profiling?"

- b) What prominent U.S. political figure supports it?

- c) Why?

11. What are the main changes that have occurred in Afghanistan since the United States launched a military operation against it in response to the September 11 attacks?

12. What does the new government of Afghanistan badly need from Western countries?

13. What factors did Prime Minister Chrétien identify as possible "root causes" of the terrorist attacks of September 11?

14. How do you personally account for the tragic events of 9/11?

15. How has 9/11 affected the way in which you view the world?

Reacting to Viewpoints

Watch the video carefully and *briefly* note the viewpoints of the following people on the impact of the events of 9/11. Then indicate whether or not you agree or disagree with the viewpoints these people express, and why. Be prepared to share your thoughts with your peers.

Speaker	Viewpoints on 9/11 Impact	Agree/Disagree	Why?
Rocco Galati immigration lawyer			
Mohammed El-Masry Islamic Congress of Canada			
Riad Saloojee Council on American-Islamic Relations			
Hassan Sader Moroccan-born U.S. tennis pro			
Mark Foley U.S. Congressman			
Sophia Saddiqui Afghan-Canadian women's advocate			
Jean Chrétien Prime Minister of Canada			

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The Debate Over Ground Zero

In the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001, New Yorkers are engaged in an ongoing debate over what kind of memorial would be most appropriate to erect at the site of the destroyed World Trade Center, known as “Ground Zero.” Here are some opinions that have been presented by various individuals involved in the discussion:

“Some people have said that this job [reconstruction of Ground Zero] will never get done in New York because it’s such an unmanageable and bureaucratic place, and all good ideas get stifled. I just don’t believe that will happen. I might have thought so a year ago, before the attacks, but so much creative thinking has occurred since then, I’m convinced it will be possible.” — Leevi Kiil, President, New York Chapter, American Institute of Architects

“That property belongs to us, it doesn’t belong to you. We’re out here bleeding to death, and all you’ve got is these fancy people designing these circuses. The blood of our loved ones is soaked into that ground. We’re going to claim it for ourselves!” — Patrick Cartier, a New York resident whose son was killed in the World Trade Center on September 11

“Everything’s up in the air. There’s all these balls in the air and it’s very unclear how things will get worked out. At the same time, we have a hole down there—a hole in the middle of the city—and there’s a real desire to do something quickly. Normally, projects on this scale take 30 years. We’re trying to do it in five or 10, and this site has

more meaning than any other in New York.” — Mark Ginsberg, architect, and co-chairman of New York New Visions

“Despite their emotional desire for something grand and defiant on the skyline, New Yorkers made it clear that they want something quite different than the old twin towers. More than anything, they resented the commercial overreach embodied in plans to cram every last square foot of rentable space lost on September 11 back into a site that, after carving out space for a memorial, would be about half the size of the original.” — John Barber, columnist, *The Globe and Mail*

“My sense is that the whole area [of lower Manhattan] is special and requires special treatment. People died on the site; they also died off the site. Body parts were found blocks away. People who lived two blocks north of here or west of here had body parts on their balconies. Body parts were strewn all over Battery Park City and Rockefeller Park—all over. Are those sacred areas?” — Madelyn Wils, elected chair of Community Board No. 1 in Lower Manhattan, and a board member of the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC), the state agency responsible for the redevelopment of Ground Zero

“What’s the mission for this site? Is it going to be an office development, or is it going to be just another neighbourhood? A cultural district or a civic centre? Who’s going to make these decisions? Nothing is clear. There’s no clear leadership in place to deal with the

big issues. Everything's just kind of evolving." — Barbara Littenberg, New York urban designer

"A 21st-century business district is a very different proposition from the kind of place that was built in the 1950s and 60s. It is no longer just an office park, closed at 6 o'clock on Friday and reopening at 9 o'clock on Monday." — Alexander Garvin, vice-president and chief planner, LMDC

"I think Lower Manhattan could become the true example of a 21st-century mixed-use downtown core that everybody now wants. The general consensus to rebuild downtown is a tremendously positive message to come out of the

tragedy of September 11." — Steven Peterson, New York architect and urban designer

"Nobody's telling the families of the victims of September 11 that they can't have everything they want. Nobody's letting them know they have to back off. Half the site of Ground Zero has already been fenced off. I think there are some real questions about what level of influence the families should have, without saying they shouldn't be respected and there shouldn't be a memorial." — Margaret Helfand, founder of New York New Visions, a consortium of 21 architectural firms proposing new development ideas for Ground Zero

To Consider

1. What are some of the differing opinions among New Yorkers regarding what should be done with the site of the destroyed World Trade Center?

2. What different groups or stakeholders are involved in the ongoing debate over how the site should be rebuilt?

3. Which group do you think should have the most important input into the decisions regarding the redevelopment of the site, and why?

4. What kind of memorial do you think would be most fitting and appropriate to be built on the site of the World Trade Center, and why?

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Next Target: Iraq?

Target: Afghanistan

In a speech to a joint session of the United States Congress shortly after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, President George W. Bush declared a “war on international terrorism.” The United States and its allies would strike against terrorist groups like Al Qaeda and whatever nations gave them a base of operations. The country singled out for immediate attention in this new war was Afghanistan, where the ruling Taliban regime had provided refuge to Osama bin Laden and his group and encouraged their activities. Less than a month after September 11, U.S. and British warplanes began a bombing campaign targeting Taliban and Al Qaeda bases in Afghanistan. Ground forces were also deployed inside the country to support the Northern Alliance, a loose coalition of Afghan warlords and militias opposed to the Taliban. Within a few weeks, the Taliban rulers were driven from power, and Al Qaeda’s presence inside Afghanistan had been reduced dramatically. However, the U.S. was not able to capture or kill either Mullah Mohammed Omar, the leader of the Taliban, or Al Qaeda mastermind Osama bin Laden.

Target: Iraq

During the summer of 2002, as the war on terrorism in Afghanistan was winding down, Bush began to escalate his war of words against the regime of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. Bush charged that Iraq was developing weapons of mass destruction, including chemical,

biological, and possibly even nuclear arms. He warned that the possession of such weapons in the hands of an evil megalomaniac like Saddam was a grave threat to peace, not only in the Middle East but also to the world at large. After Iraq’s decisive defeat at the hands of a U.S.-led coalition in the Persian Gulf War of 1991, Saddam had been forced to admit United Nations arms inspectors as part of the peace terms imposed on him. In 1998, these inspectors were withdrawn. Saddam was making their job of monitoring the country’s weapons development programs impossible. Despite a short but sharp combined U.S.-British military action called “Operation Desert Fox,” Saddam refused to permit the inspectors to re-enter his country.

By the fall of 2002, the Bush administration had decided that the re-admission of arms inspectors was no longer the important issue, and that Iraq’s government had to be changed. Just after the first anniversary of the September 11 attacks, Bush delivered an important foreign policy speech. He stated that the United States reserved for itself the right to act unilaterally anywhere in the world in pre-emptive strikes against countries it believed to be planning hostile acts against it or permitting terrorist groups to do so. He hoped that the United Nations would approve of such American actions. However if such support were not forthcoming, he would move alone, or with the backing of countries like Britain, whose leader, Prime Minister Tony Blair, was a staunch ally. Iraq indicated in early October 2002 that it

was willing to permit the UN arms inspection teams to re-enter the country and have total access to any sites they wished to visit. Nonetheless, the Bush administration maintained that the only way Iraq's hostile potential could be neutralized for good was by "regime change," the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's government, by force if necessary.

The leaders of many countries that considered themselves close friends of the United States, including Canada, had strong reservations about the new "Bush doctrine" of pre-emptive strikes. They feared that an American invasion of Iraq might cost the lives of thousands of innocent Iraqi civilians. If it were conducted without UN approval, such an attack might also trigger a huge conflict in the Middle East, dragging in a number of states in the region and creating great instability in the process. There were also concerns that other countries might adopt the strategy of pre-emptive actions in their own disputes with neighbouring states. The example of India and Pakistan, two rival powers that both possess nuclear weapons, was one such case. In Germany, the government of Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder won a narrow re-election victory because of its strong opposition to Bush's plan to invade Iraq. Public opinion polls in Canada and Western Europe indicated that a large majority of citizens were opposed to the American doctrine of pre-emptive strikes against real or imagined enemies.

Inside the United States itself, as talk of war with Iraq increased, some voices of concern were also raised about the potential damage such a step might cause to America's image in the world. Bush's opponent in the 2002 presidential election, Al Gore, warned that the

U.S. risked alienating the international good will and solidarity it had won after September 11. But with elections for the U.S. Congress approaching in November 2002, most American political leaders were very reluctant to appear to be disloyal to their country by questioning the wisdom of Bush's war plans. At the United Nations, the U.S. urged the Security Council to pass a strongly worded resolution demanding that Iraq permit the arms inspectors unrestricted access to all possible sites of weapons development within a week. If it failed to do so, military force could then be authorized to proceed against it.

Amid the growing international crisis between the United States and Iraq, the questions of whether Saddam Hussein really possessed the deadly weapons and whether he had any intention of using them if he did remained topics of heated debate. Former UN arms inspector Scott Ritter, a U.S. military official himself, strongly maintained that Iraq did not in fact have such weapons. It was in no position to develop them after the massive destruction inflicted in the Gulf War. But British Prime Minister Tony Blair countered this claim with a document that offered evidence from his country's intelligence agencies that he believed proved just the contrary. Some former advisors to Bush's father, George Bush, who had played major roles during the Gulf War, believed that if Saddam really did possess deadly weapons of mass destruction, he might only use them if he were facing certain defeat following an American invasion of his country. This, ironically, would be the very result the U.S. action was supposed to prevent in the first place.

By October 2002, as the likelihood of war mounted, critics of Bush's policy charged that there were other motives besides Iraq's alleged possession of

weapons of mass destruction. Some suggested that the action against Iraq was motivated by the need for the United States to secure a stable supply of cheap Middle Eastern oil. After Saudi Arabia, Iraq is the major oil producing state in the region. Others claimed that Bush needed a war to distract public attention in his own country. In the run-up to the congressional elections, Bush faced a seriously deteriorating economic situation and mounting scandals over corporate corruption such as the Enron affair. Some critics claimed that the United States needed to find another target in the ongoing war on terrorism after the

mixed results of its actions in Afghanistan. There was also the view in many countries that after September 11 the United States felt itself justified to use its overwhelming military force against any country in the world whose government system it found unacceptable. Whatever the validity of such arguments, it was becoming clear by late 2002 that the Bush doctrine of pre-emptive strikes might result in an ongoing series of conflicts between the United States and other nations. The fallout from 9/11 continues to threaten disastrous consequences for the world order.

To Consider

1. In what ways could the “war on terrorism” in Afghanistan be considered both a success and a failure to date?

2. What is President George W. Bush’s justification for

- a) an attack on Iraq

- b) pre-emptive strikes against America’s enemies

3. Do you think Canada should support the United States if it mounts a military action against Iraq a) with, or b) without the approval of the United Nations?

4. Do you support or reject the “Bush doctrine” of pre-emptive U.S. military actions against countries it believes to be plotting hostile acts against it? Explain.

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Activity: Plan Your Own September 11 Memorial

With your class, discuss how the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, were commemorated in Canada, the United States, and elsewhere in the world. Also discuss the issues surrounding the building of a permanent memorial to those who lost their lives in the attacks

on the site of the destroyed World Trade Center, or “Ground Zero” in New York. Make a list of what you think are the most appropriate ways of commemorating this tragic event in the future, and what kind of memorials you think should be built, and why.

Work in small groups on one of the following ideas for planning and conducting some kind of memorial for September 11, 2001, and its continuing impact on the world.

1. Visual display of photos, newspapers, eyewitness testimony, etc. (to be displayed in public areas of the school).
2. In-class memorial service or discussion of the main issues raised by the events of September 11.
3. School assembly with guest speaker(s) discussing the impact of September 11 on Canada and the world (e.g. figures from the media, federal, provincial, or municipal politics, etc.).
4. Meeting with local representatives of the Islamic and/or Middle Eastern communities to discuss issues of racism and stereotyping arising from September 11, and how these could be combated.
5. In-class viewing of video documentaries dealing with the events of September 11 and their consequences for the world, followed by critical-thinking and media-literacy exercises to analyze and critique their content, point of view, etc.
6. Ongoing monitoring of the impact of the “war on terrorism” as it spreads from Afghanistan to Iraq and possibly other countries the United States designates as part of the “axis of evil.”