



# Humanity shines through these acts of barbarism



**I**n the gruesome terror murders in Mumbai (formerly Bombay), there were moments of humanity that give us all some consolation.

The Australians caught in this savagery behaved very well.

There was David Coker, the young Australian backpacker who covered his injured girlfriend with his own body when the shooting started.

There was the courage and solidarity of the Indian hotel staff in the Taj and the Oberoi hotels, who helped hotel guests of all nationalities.

There were the brave Indian policemen, operating with ancient equipment, and especially bulletproof vests that didn't keep out the bullets, who fought the much-better-armed terrorists to save the innocent. More than a dozen Indian police died.

And then there was Sandra Samuel, the Indian nanny to the little two-year-old son of Rabbi Gavriel Holtzberg and his wife, Rivka. The rabbi and his wife, resident in the religious and non-political Chabad House, were murdered by the terrorists for the sole "crime" of being Jewish.

When the terrorists burst in, Sandra hid in a closet. Much later she judged she might have a chance of escape. But she could hear little Moishe, two years old, the son of the murdered rabbi, crying in the confusion, so she found him and took him out with her, certainly saving his life.

It is the decency of these moments of humanity which give us hope against the savage, sectarian barbarity of the terrorists.

Theirs is truly the ideology of death. Their jealousy and hatred of anyone different from themselves, in this case India. It reduces to a violent nihilism that believes in nothing, that elevates nothing, that is devoid of all that is decent in humanity. This terrorist attack represents a new

stage in the global war on terrorism in several ways.

First, like the 9/11 attacks in New York, it will have significant geopolitical consequences.

For a start, it will draw India and the United States closer together. The terrorists wanted to kill Jews, as their attack on the Chabad House demonstrates.

They wanted to kill Americans and Brits, whom they singled out among the guests at the Taj and Oberoi hotels. But they also wanted to kill Indians, which they did in large numbers at the railway station and at the hospital they attacked.

The terrorists now hate India as much as they hate the US. One of the many things they hate about India is that it is a democracy and is embracing modern capitalist economic development. For the terrorists, the ideal state is Afghanistan under the Taliban.

It is an insane nonsense to think that the terrorists were motivated by inequalities within India. That has nothing to do with the coherent, internally consistent but hate-filled, conspiracy-laden ideology which motivates the terrorists.

But the terrorists failed in their bid to drive a wedge between Washington and New Delhi, as was evident in the popularity of US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, who almost immediately flew to India to show solidarity with its people.

The second big geo-strategic consequence of this outrage is a crisis in relations between Pakistan and India.

The surviving gunman, the only one captured alive, is Pakistani and says that all his fellow gunmen were Pakistani. He has fingered the terror group Lashkar-e-Toiba as being behind the attack. There are four things you should know about LET.

First, it was founded by the Pakistani military intelligence

agency, the ISI.

Second, although now nominally banned, it operates with impunity in Pakistan under a different name and has well-known training camps there.

Third, it works intimately with al-Qaeda.

And fourth, it has often tried to kill Australians, for Australians too, like Indians and Americans, are designated enemies as far as the terrorists are concerned.

The Pakistan Government claims it had nothing to do with the Mumbai killings.

At the very least, Pakistan is a wretched failure at controlling its own territory. What to do about Pakistan becomes a very big question, for the United States, for India and for Australia.

Australian soldiers are dying in Afghanistan because Pakistan has allowed the Taliban (which it also created) to use its territory as a safe haven from which to launch attacks at NATO and Australian troops trying to give Afghanistan a chance at a democratic future, rather than the totalitarian nightmare they endured under Taliban rule.

Pakistan, like India, has some dozens of nuclear weapons. Al-Qaeda now has more Afghan and Pakistani members than it does Arab members, and al-Qaeda's leader, Osama bin Laden, is thought to be hiding out somewhere in Pakistan's tribal badlands. If a nuclear weapon is going to fall into the hands of terrorists anywhere, it is more likely to happen in Pakistan than anywhere else.

And, finally, the Mumbai attacks may have changed the nature of terrorist attacks in the future. The terrorists lost 10 well trained followers in Mumbai. But from their point of view, they succeeded in their core aims.

They not only murdered a large number of people, they inflicted



great economic damage on India, they showed the Americans they can still murder their citizens around the world, and they totally dominated global media for several days in a row.

Don't think Mumbai is unique.



**Suffer the children:** A police officer tends to a young victim of the blasts at a hospital in Mumbai