

INTERNATIONALIST PERSPECTIVE

The Reality of the
« First War of the
21th Century »

\$ 2
£ 1.50

n° 39
Winter 2001–2002

Contents

Terrorist Attacks and the American Response : The Reality of the « First War of the 21th Century »...	1
Islamism : Political Ideology and Movement.....	6
The Rationality of (Self)-Destruction.....	9
Leaflets on the Terrorist Attacks and the War in Afghanistan	
The Reality of the « First War of the 21th Century ».....	14
Fear	16
Refuse Both Terrorism and Militarism... ..	20

Subscriptions

Internationalist Perspective appears twice a year, in English and in French. A subscription for four issues can be obtained from one of our three addresses, at the following rates:

English Edition: £ 3.50 / \$ 5.00 : regular mail	French Edition: 300 FB / 50 FF : regular mail
£ 5.00 / \$ 8.00 : air mail	400 FB / 70 FF : air mail

Requests for subscriptions in the US (for the English or French edition) should be sent to the address in the US with cheques made payable to CASH. All other other requests for subscriptions should be addressed to the USA for the English Edition and to Brussels for the French edition (money orders to n° 271-0108192-69).

Public Meetings

From time to time, *Internationalist Perspective* holds public meetings, as part of its work of stimulating a real debate and discussion around vital questions confronting revolutionaries and the working class. For information on the next meeting, write to the addresses below.

Correspondence

We invite all our readers to send their comments on the positions and analyses expressed in our publications. The development of a proletarian political milieu on the international level depends on the widest possible discussion and on the confrontation of ideas.

Contact Addresses

Write only as shown below :

Destryker
BP 1181
Centre Monnaie
1000 Bruxelles
BELGIQUE

AM
P.O. Box 40231
S.I., New York 10304
U.S.A.

Email us at : ippi@skynet.be

Visit our website : **multimania.com/ippi**

Editor : F. Destryker, 5 drève des Lilas, B-1310 La Hulpe

Dépôt Bruxelles X

Terrorist Attacks and the American Response

THE REALITY OF THE "FIRST WAR OF THE 21ST CENTURY"

In previous issues of Internationalist Perspective we have raised the question of genocide, and of the wars in the Balkans as a manifestation of the violence intrinsic to the decadent capitalist system. The attacks that took place in The United States on September 11, 2001, as well as Washington's recourse to war that immediately followed, have only re-emphasized that facet of the functioning of capitalism. Since then, if we have denounced those attacks as a manifestation of barbarism totally alien to the action of the working class, we have, in the same terms, denounced the recourse to war decided upon by the bourgeoisie. Once again, the alternative "capitalist barbarism or the formation of a new society" starkly manifests itself. One of the tasks of revolutionaries is to contribute to an understanding of the world in which we live. That is why we are examining the bases and the stakes of the current international situation.

In this issue of IP we are publishing the position statements of other revolutionaries, as well as our own leaflet.

In this editorial, we are going to examine the events from three perspectives:

- the strategico-economic reasons for the attacks and the response to them;
- the inter-imperialist dimension of the events;
- the ideological aspects shaping them.

THE INS AND OUTS OF THE EVENTS

At the moment they occurred, the attacks perpetrated against the symbols of American capitalism on September 11, left us stupified and incredulous. We immediately made an effort to grasp the reasons for this act of violence. With a little distance, such a murderous occurrence should not be the occasion for surprise: it is an integral part of the very foundations of a system that engenders only death and destruction. And that is precisely one of the primary reasons for which we combat it!

To grasp the reasons for such attacks, we must situate them in their global geo-political and economic context. The attacks do not concern Afghanistan alone, and still less just bin Laden, but rather have their roots in the whole region of the Middle-East and Central Asia -- a zone to which we already pointed as a future area of global destabilization at the time of the Balkan wars. It is a question of a highly strategic region, rich in gas and oil, and also constituting the hub through which energy will be shipped from Central Asia and the Caspian region to Asiatic and European markets. It is an economic space that stimulates local and international rivalries, and thereby involves economic and imperialist interests. Economic, inasmuch as the world's biggest oil producer -- Saudi Arabia -- and its oil-rich neighbors, as well as the republics of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, all rich in gas too are involved. Imperialist, inasmuch as these nations and their raw materials are either

coveted by Russia or by American and European interests. It is in this strategic complex that Afghanistan is situated, and it is also around this strategic complex that international interests and local interests shaped by Islamism confront one another.

For many years, The US has pretty much had complete control over the countries of this region thanks to the submission of local pro-American governments or majority factions of the ruling class there. Nevertheless, that equilibrium has become increasingly unstable because of the global economic crisis which has put extreme pressure on fragile local economies, further impoverishing their populations and increasing social tension. As a result, certain factions of the bourgeoisie of these countries have been increasingly tempted to overturn American domination. Two opposed types of reactions can be seen on the part of the local bourgeoisie in these countries: there are factions which see their economic strategy exclusively within the orbit of the US, and those which seek to leave this orbit, and to challenge it. It is precisely this latter tendency that is expressed by the present Islamist movement, a movement that must not be seen as a mere archaic and retrograde ideological or religious current, but rather as a political and economic phenomenon seeking to fill the place once occupied by so-called socialist factions, which in the recent past sought to bring about the industrialization and modernization of their countries, and whose defeat gave a free hand to foreign investors. The Islamist current is indeed a movement led by elements of the ruling class and the local intelligentsia, even if it rooted in a population that economic conditions have plunged into a growing impoverishment. These radical Islamist factions are decidedly not expressions of a return to the past, but rather are determined to implement modern economic policies in their different states, all the more so as the crisis and international competition has exacerbated economic tensions and made control of energy resources still more crucial for the local powers.

The analysis of the Islamist current permits us to return to the events of September 11. When we seek to understand the motivation of the terrorists, it is plausible to advance the following hypothesis. Those who perpetrated the attacks (probably elements of the bin Laden group, but that is not too important) sought to act on two levels:

destabilize world capital and show that American hegemony was contestable;

thanks to the foreseeable and massive response of the US vis-à-vis the countries of the Middle-East, provoke a destabilization of the pro-American factions in power to the benefit of opposing factions defending more "national" interests. They hoped that the situation created by the American response would produce political and social chaos, allowing them to overthrow those in power locally or at least to mount a serious challenge to them. In the first place, their objective was the pro-Western regimes of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, the former because of its military and nuclear arsenal, the latter because of its oil.

The causes of the attacks, then, have deep economic and political roots. They reflect the interests of factions of the bourgeoisie which seek to extricate themselves from American hegemony, retake control of their own energy resources, and even become direct competitors of the West thanks to their new-found economic and military trump-cards.

INTER-IMPERIALIST ASPECTS

Besides the very important economic interests at stake, the region of Central Asia concentrates interests of a fundamental geo-strategic order. If one focuses on the inter-imperialist dimension of the situation several questions arise. Why has the American response focused on Afghanistan? What is the degree of cohesion between the US and its "allies"? Are we today perhaps living in a world without imperialist tensions; in the world of "super-imperialism" described by Karl Kautsky?

As we have already indicated, Afghanistan is situated astride a central point for the oil and gas pipelines linking Central Asia to the West. As a result, a more direct control of that country represents a trump-card on the economic as well as the strategic level. That was something well understood by the Americans at the time of the invasion of Afghanistan by the Russians. They supported and cultivated those who opposed the Soviet invader -- among them bin Laden and what became the Taliban. Since then, the situation has developed in the following way: the Taliban maintained the country in a condition acceptable to the Americans, even as bin Laden increasingly distanced himself from the US. In attacking the Taliban regime and designating it as the party principally responsible for the September 11 attacks, the Americans found a scapegoat with little support in the region; it was the course of least resistance. The present military operation thereby permits an effective extension of American control in this strategic geographical zone. Ultimately, it can permit the US to increase its presence in Central Asia, and to encircle Russia even more. The collapse of the Soviet empire has created a void, and since 1991 the US has sought to penetrate the region and to reduce Russian influence as much as possible. The accord concluded between the Americans and Uzbekistan to utilize Uzbek territory as a base for military operations is a perfect example, and reflects the American hope to make this small republic a privileged ally and a counterweight to Russian influence. The military operation in Afghanistan will therefore permit the US to get a direct foothold in the region, and to establish a durable military presence and a base for the surveillance of Russia, Iran, and China. The present military operation can also serve as the occasion for the Americans to correct some previous "errors:" a segment of the American leadership sees an opportunity to bring to a successful conclusion the action in Iraq, begun with the Gulf war, by finishing off Saddam Hussein.

What is the degree of cohesion between the "allies"? For many states, the American reaction brings with it certain advantages. For example, countries like China, Pakistan, Russia, and Indonesia, see in it a green light to go ahead and crush movements seeking self-determination within their own frontiers. On the economic plane, the projects for the construction of oil pipelines frequently involve international consortia, and a more significant American presence in the region will guarantee a certain stability for Western enterprises dependent on new sources of energy. From the ideological point of view, this is an opportunity to attribute the effects of the present economic crisis on terrorist attacks, and to take the drastic economic measures required to deal with the recession. There is also the prospect of creating a state of permanent psychosis among the civil population, making it possible to intensify police controls and even creating a mentality in which certain segments of the population seek shelter under the protective wing of their respective state apparatus. Outside of the submission of the "allied" powers to American hegemony, there are, then, also direct interests that are shared. It's also worth pointing to an indirect consequence of the present war: the temporary breathing-space that an increase in armaments expenditures can represent for the world economy. Besides these common interests, it is clear that the US has "purchased" the support of a series of countries: the collaboration of Russia in exchange for its membership in the World Trade Organization, and now in its request for integration in the European Union and cooperation with NATO. Just now, Russia has received a considerable benefit thanks to its sale of military equipment to Iran. China's support for the American military offensive has also had a similar price: further integration into the world economy, entry into the WTO, and increasing foreign investment.

Nonetheless, there is also dissent, and limits to the marge de manoeuvre available to the US in Europe and the Orient. The American air strikes and military operations have provoked bitterness in Muslim countries, and represent a risk of inflaming the situation there -- an outcome surely welcomed by extremist factions hoping for a destabilization of the factions in power in the Islamic world. While the Taliban regime has few friends in the Muslim world, American aggression against a "sister" community is not without its risks. The difficulty facing the leadership of Muslim regimes that support the US is real indeed: Pakistan faces violent civilian protests, Saudi Arabia has prudently taken its distance, as has Iran; Uzbekistan has hidden the American presence from its own population, while Egypt, the Sudan, and Nigeria have witnessed sometimes violent and murderous demonstrations. These reactions express the bitterness of the population to new manifestations of the limitless domination of the US, as well as the strategy of the Islamist factions which have taken advantage of the situation to attempt to destabilize the ruling groups in these countries. This is the case in Pakistan, where the secular and pro-American president, Musharraf, is having a difficult time confronting the pressure from the "street" and from Islamist factions.

In addition to these reactions, the positions that various countries take in the present war can also heighten old conflicts: thus, the opposition between Pakistan and India over Kashmir has been exacerbated following the virtually unconditional support offered by the Americans to the Islamabad regime. That opposition has been further enflamed inasmuch as India has never completely turned its back on Russia, and China -- a foe of India's on the economic and military planes -- supports Pakistan.

Another element of instability in the region is the passing of the "old monarchs" in Jordan and Syria, together with the incapacity of the Saudi king. In a sense, social and political tensions, which had been contained by the old rulers, pro-American for the most part, are intensifying, making the situation harder to contain for the younger generation of rulers -- who are also under pressure to run their states in a more "modern" fashion. Finally, the abcess represented by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, itself exacerbated by the catastrophic state of the economy in Israel, by the economic strangulation of the Palestinian territories, and the end of any political illusions there, are all elements that further add to the precariousness of the regional equilibrium.

On the side of the European "allies," if they are all singing from the same song-book as the Americans, it is not always the same tune, and the dissonance has grown from the get-go. Thus, if Great Britain has played its role as privileged ally by participating in military operations in Afghanistan, the Europeans have often distanced themselves from the overly bellicose Americans, urging moderation upon them. Their function is above all diplomatic; the European presidency has expended a great deal of energy to maintain support for the American strikes. It's scarcely possible to count the number of trips by the "European troika" to keep things in line or the pathetic speeches by Tony Blair. Moreover, European governments must also take into account public opinion in their respective countries. Even if the conflict opposes a professional military to what is presented as callous and brutal terrorists in a distant corner of the world, even if information about the conflict is disseminated in a controlled fashion, the incessant propaganda to which the local population is subjected, still has not left Europeans indifferent. A proof of that is the unprecedented ideological arsenal deployed in order to keep the populace in a state of fear that would serve to "justify" the ongoing, unjustifiable, military operation.

Finally, if for the moment, China, Russia, and the US, have common interests, one can only wonder for how long these competitors will be able to maintain their present entente, especially when it is a matter of the Americans permanently installing themselves in Central Asia.

The present unity among the "allies" should not make us forget the opposing economic and strategic interests of the different governments. If the bourgeoisie can find an advantage in deploying a united strategy, it is nonetheless riven by an ever more intense economic competition; and this latter will necessarily exacerbate imperialist tensions between rivals. The fact that these tensions do not at the moment

express themselves in open warfare between opposed imperialist protagonists does not mean that we now find ourselves in a world in which such tensions have been overcome; an harmonious world, administered by a bourgeoisie unencumbered by rivalries. The present world is anything but harmonious; anything but a world without imperialist tensions. Even if the globalization of the economy now pushes states to put some of their divergences on the back-burner, these latter are still very much present, exacerbated by the economic crisis, and indeed perceptible behind each conflict -- the Balkans, for example, or today, the Middle-East. Imperialism is one of the bases of the capitalist system, just like scarcity and competition!

IDEOLOGICAL ASPECTS

This war has provided the ruling class with the opportunity to give us a lesson in how to wield ideology. This can be seen in two ways: with respect to the Muslim "allies" and vis a vis the Western population.

The ideological pressure exercised by the US (no bombing on the day of prayer, chances given to the Taliban to turn over bin Laden, delivery of foodstuffs, speeches stressing respect for Islam as a faith, economic aid to Pakistan, etc.) show that Bush has wielded the carrot as well as the stick, out of a fear of a backlash. That dual tactic is indicative of the fragility of the situation in Afghanistan's neighbors, of the hesitation of the Muslim allies to commit to war, and probably of opposition within the Bush cabinet between the supporters of military action and those who are more committed to diplomacy.

In the European countries, some anti-war demonstrations have occurred, but to our knowledge, despite the interest and the potential of certain reactions, nothing on a scale that would threaten existing governments has taken place. Nonetheless, the bourgeoisie does not have a lot of elbow room, as can be seen by the distance taken from the outset vis a vis the too bellicose reaction of the Americans. If anti-war demonstrations have not been massive, there exists within the population a generalized climate of criticism with respect to the American action. That distance is also a reflection of the tensions provoked by the politico-military domination imposed on Europe by the US in the face of the European desire to create its own common military force, and thereby assert a greater autonomy. In that context, the tension between the dollar and the euro has intensified.

It's also necessary to emphasize the sometimes very violent opposition movements and strikes that have occurred in Muslim countries: in Pakistan, Nigeria, Indonesia, Iran, Saudi Arabia. It is clear that despite the repression of those demonstrations, discontent has grown.

But, we must above all emphasize the phenomenal ideological campaign directed at the civilian populations. Whether it's the images of planes crashing into the Twin

Towers of the World Trade Center, people jumping from its windows, the broadcast of the last telephone messages from victims to their families or the inordinate fear of new attacks or bacteriological warfare which are constantly played up by the media, we can only conclude that the bourgeoisie has already achieved a major victory. In the period before September 11, the media were full of images of anti-globalization demonstrators, and of police actions against them. It is clear that any potential that the anti-globalization movement had to threaten the functioning of the system has now been relegated to the back burner -- largely as a result of the emotional shock fed by all the tools at the disposal of the dominant ideology.

In addition, for quite some time the bourgeoisie has presented war as a humanitarian act for the liberation of oppressed people. Who could defend the infamous tyrant Saddam Hussein, the abominable Milosevic, or the Taliban and their war against women? War is no longer war, but the liberation of Kuwaitis whose land has been invaded, of Albanians who are the victims of ethnic cleansing, and now of starving Afghans. That vision, combined with "surgical" air strikes, is far from the image of trench warfare and horrific slaughter that characterized the two world wars. We must denounce this because that sort of argument now permits the bourgeoisie to masquerade as peaceful, obstructing the possibility of seeing the violent nature of capitalism, and preventing opposition to military actions. It is necessary to see the terrorists and the response to them as two sides of the same coin: the incredible violence generated by the capitalist system.

The present ideological campaigns have had an impact on the few open reactions of opposition to this war. We can point to the demonstrations in the European countries, which have by no means been massive. Yet, we can also point to the fact -- which is, indeed, positive -- that despite the media blitz justifying war, to which the European and American populations have been subjected, we have not seen the patriotic craze which the bourgeoisie has sought to foster. On the contrary, the atmosphere is rather one of a certain distance from the war, which means that the ruling class does not have the kind of ideological control that it seeks. So, why are we not seeing more and larger anti-war demonstrations? The demonstrations in Europe against the Austrian neo-Nazi, Haider, and the participation of his Freedom party in the government were more massive. But, that was opposition to a known quantity: the horror of Nazism and its death camps. The present war does not (yet) provide us with images of similar horror. That said, the constant ideological barrage does not in itself explain the lack of a popular reaction to the American strikes. We also need to acknowledge the difficulty that the working class has in articulating its own class perspective.

CONCLUSION

The world of decadent capitalism is increasingly violent and destructive. The attacks of September 11 are but one more example of what this system has in store for us. The analysis of the reasons for that attack make it possible to grasp the economic, strategic and ideological stakes at issue today. More than ever, it is clear that the very survival of humanity requires the destruction of the capitalist system and its replacement by a new society. The project of such a new society is borne by an international class: the proletariat, which has no specific economic, political or strategic interest, but which is the object of capitalist exploitation. While that class today faces numerous difficulties in perceiving its own community of interests, even in recognizing itself as a class, and in working out its own perspectives, the conditions of exploitation to which it is subjected, and the expressions of class struggle that have erupted since the beginning of the 1990's, indicate that the old mole of revolution is still at work.

ROSE

October 2001

Refuse both Terrorism and Militarism

(Continuation from page 20)

order, and the free market economy OR against all of these, and thus for “anarchy”, “violence”, “destruction”, “disorder”, and “TERROR”. This, of course, is a false choice, and none but a few lunatics are going take up the fight for Terror. However, there will be strong pressure exerted on most people-and thus, on much of the working class-to “tow the line”, to “fall into line”, behind the President and his administration, that is, support and fully identify oneself with the U.S. STATE. This pressure must be resolutely resisted if humanity is to avoid falling victim to a new World War between terrorist gangs, states or otherwise.

Many people are just as disgusted and sickened by the response to the attacks of the American ruling class, and its allies, in their attempt to use the current crisis in order to consolidate their power over us and to save their economy from collapse, as they are by the attacks themselves. We need to keep

in mind that capitalism-and thus each capitalist state-has an inherent tendency towards war as a means of attempting to resolve its inherent contradictions. Mass destruction, death and the devalorization of existing capital bring about conditions favourable to renewed economic growth.

Working class people need to remember that their interests are clearly distinct from those of ‘their’ state and its ruling class. When those rulers claim that workers must sacrifice wages, benefits, working conditions, and even their own lives “for the good of the nation”, we must remain true to our own human interests and refuse to accept their imposition of austerity, cuts and militarization of society. It is our own rulers (those of the dominant imperialist countries, that is), who, by their exploitation and subjugation of people in numerous “lesser developed” countries, not to mention various CIA-directed coups and murderous counter-insurgencies, have sown the seeds of terrorist attacks such as those that occurred in the U.S. on September 11th. Well, you reap just what you sow. But in fact, it is always the working people who suffer the most in these cases. The powerful and the wealthy are usually safely out of the way.

There is only one way in which the escalating cycle of terror and violence between states and terrorist gangs can be permanently eliminated, and that is by means of the organized, militant resistance of the global working class to all those who hold power over us. That is why the working class needs to begin, starting today, working towards ridding the world of the source of terrorism in all its forms and guises, by escalating its own class struggle against all the gangsters of the ruling class, and ultimately, against the system which they are all merely agents of, that is, capitalism. To do that, the working class must come to identify itself as a distinct class, which, through its own internal (and international) solidarity and conscious action, has the collective power to finally rid the world of this scourge.

Capitalism is war!

To resist war, we must resist
capital everywhere!

Wage Slave X
September 2001

Contact: <waslax@hotmail.com>

ISLAMISM :POLITICAL IDEOLOGY AND MOVEMENT

Beginning with the invasion of Egypt by the armies of Napoleon in 1798, which began the modern involvement of the West in the Arab world, until the present, Arab-Islamic nationalism has assumed three successive, though somewhat overlapping, forms: liberal nationalism, Arab socialism, and Islamism.¹

Liberal nationalism as a political movement was epitomized by the statist, national-development regime of Muhammed Ali in Egypt, with its goal of overturning "Oriental feudalism," and its (ultimately failed) project of modernization, and capitalization. Ideologically, this liberal nationalism sought, in the writings of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, to unite the Muslim nation, the umma, to resist Western imperialism by reconciling Islam and modern rationalism, through which a powerful Muslim nation could be forged; a vision elaborated by Muhammed `Abduh who believed that reason and (Islamic) revelation, Islam and modern science, were reconcilable, though this required the dismantling of the traditional social, economic, and political institutions of the Muslim world, which were -- in his view -- perversions of Islam. (It is worth noting that `Abduh's disciples, like Qasim Amin, championed the emancipation of women, with his claim that the Shari`a provided a basis for the equality of women, which he viewed as crucial to the progress of human society.) What is significant about these ideologies and political projects is that they were integrally linked to the process of capitalization which had spread from Europe to the Islamic world; that they were inseparable from the project of bourgeois revolution, anti-feudalism and national economic development, that was the hallmark of ascendant capitalism. Perhaps the last gasp of this liberal nationalism in the Islamic world can be seen in political movements such as the Wafd in Egypt, and its leader Sa`d Zaghlul. As the heir to `Abduh, Zaghlul and the Wafd also sought to create the conditions for a modern, democratic and bourgeois state in Egypt. But, while Muhammed Ali in the early nineteenth century was prepared to directly challenge

Western imperialism, which mobilized to crush him, the Wafd in the 1930's compromised with British imperialism. That compromise demonstrated that the project of capitalization and industrialization in predominantly agrarian societies, like those of the Islamic world, would henceforth break with the liberalism of the Arab-Islamic nationalists of the ascendant phase of capitalism.

The precursors of Arab socialism were those political movements in the 1930's that modeled themselves on Italian fascism and German Nazism. Movements such as the Green Shirts of Young Egypt, or Antun Sa`ada's Parti Populaire Syrien were determined to break with the dominant British and French imperialisms in the Middle East, and to embark on a statist project to promote capitalist industrialization. The failure of German imperialism to overcome its Anglo-Saxon rival, led nationalists like Michel Aflak and his Ba`ath party in Syria and Iraq, and Gamal Abdel Nasser and the Free Officers in Egypt to embrace "socialism" as the route to industrialization and modernity, and to align themselves with Stalinist Russia in its conflict with the West. All these movements were resolutely secular in their ideology, often with Christians, like Sa`ada and Aflak, providing the leadership. The Arab nation, not the Muslim umma, provided the social base which these movements sought to mobilize in the interests of the statist-developmental model that they instantiated. Nasser's Arab socialism, and its alliance with Russia, epitomizes this futile project. It yielded neither national economic development, nor the elimination of Western imperialism from the Arab-Islamic world. Sadat's bold transfer of Egypt from the Russian to the American camp, the peace treaty with Israel, and Cairo's subordination to the World Bank, IMF, and the other institutions of American global hegemony, signified the failure of Arab socialism to accomplish what Muhammed Ali had failed to accomplish more than a century earlier. Into the void created by the bankruptcy of Arab socialism there stepped a new political ideology and movement: Islamism.

The precursor of contemporary Islamism was Hassan el-Banna's Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt (founded in 1928), which, unlike the liberal nationalists who sought to reconcile

Islam and modernity, or the Arab socialists who were resolutely secular, was determined to reject modernity and restore the rule of Islamic virtue. Yet Islamism first came to state power not through the Sunni Muslim Brotherhood (decapitated first by the Wafdist regime, and the British, and then by the Nasserist), but in the rule of the Shi'ite Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran. While Khomeini sought to rally the Shia of the Arab world to his cause, the fact that the Shia were a minority, scorned and hated in the (majority) Sunni world of Islam, severely limited the success of Khomeini and the Iranians. New, Sunni, versions of Islamism, would prove more successful in mobilizing masses of Muslims in both the Arab world and in Central and South Asia: The Armed Islamic Group in Algeria, Islamic Jihad and al-Gama al-Islamiyya in Egypt, Hamas in Palestine, the Taliban in Afghanistan, and Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network. While Islamism appears to be an ideology and political movement that is adamantly opposed to modernity, and which seeks to reinvigorate traditional Islamic beliefs and institutions, it is very much the product of the destruction of the pre-capitalist Arab-Islamic world, and both as ideology and political project is irretrievably stamped with the imprint of modernity and capitalism. (In this respect, Islamism has much in common with Nazism, with its ideological recourse to a pre-capitalist Gemeinschaft, and Aryan religion, even while it instantiated the most brutal realities of capitalism and imperialism in its social relations and political project.)

This integral connection between Islamism and capitalism can be seen in the two dimensions of Islamism as ideology and political project. Despite its appeals to Islamic tradition, Islamism constitutes a form of proto-state or state racism. Here, we are not speaking of racism in the ordinary language sense, where it is a matter of color (blacks, whites, etc.), but rather as any ideology predicated on a bifurcation, a cut, in the social fabric based on birth, on biology, genetics, as qualities of one's very being, as opposed to cuts in the social fabric based on beliefs, world views, or -- as in Marxism -- the social relations of production (class), which is the antithesis of the biologization of cuts in the social fabric of humanity upon which Islamism is based. The misogynistic vision of women as biologically inferior, integral to the ideology of the Taliban and al Qaeda (and which has no basis in traditional Islam), the yellow badge that the Taliban regime imposed on the Hindu minority in Afghanistan, the reconceptualization of the umma on genetico-biological bases, as opposed to a community of belief, which is integral to the world view of bin Laden and Islamism, all attest to a racialization of Islam at the core of this ideology. State racism and the biologization of social relations are integral to the obsession with "purification" that animates Islamism -- not the purification of the individual's soul, but the purification of the social fabric itself. The discourses of purification which characterize Islamism, are themselves the ante-chamber to ethnic cleansing and genocide. The fate of Hindus in Taliban Afghanistan (a minority of only several hundred), or the Shi'ite Hazaras facing ethnic cleansing, foreshadows the catastrophe that would await the Copts of Egypt (a minority of six million, itself an ominous figure) were the Islamic Jihad to take power there. This state racism, and biologization of social relations,

are features of one dimension of capitalist modernity, its dark side, epitomized by Auschwitz, Babi Yar, Dresden and Hiroshima, all the quintessential products of high capitalist civilization, and inseparable from it. The development of Islamism attests to the spread to the Arab-Islamic world of the same capitalist social relations and ideologies, albeit in historically and culturally specific forms, that have shaped the capitalist world in its phase of decadence.

Despite its claim that its political project is simply to effect the withdrawal of the West from the soil of the "Muslim nation" (now re-conceived biologically), and its subsequent purification, Islamism can only hope to achieve that goal (futile though it is) by attempting to compete with its Western enemy economically and militarily. Such a project means not the halt to the capitalization of the Islamic world, but its completion, its apotheosis, by Islamist regimes themselves. Thus the Khomeini regime in Iran, after the overthrow of the Shah, has developed the oil industry, integrally linked to the global capitalist economy, and necessitating a brutal regime of exploitation of the proletariat, and developed industries and scientific institutes for the production of weapons of mass destruction to elevate it to the status of a major regional imperialist power. The Ayatollahs have taken the path of capitalist scientific, technological, economic and military development, which, despite their protests of Islamic purity, will complete the destruction of the traditional Islamic world of the Iranian past. The same imperatives are at work in the Sunni branch of Islamism represented by al-Qaeda -- though it is still only a proto-state. Bin Laden's project to eliminate Western imperialism from the soil of the Muslim nation seems to entail two short term goals: using the Taliban regime in Afghanistan as a beach-head to destabilize and overthrow the secular Pakistani regime, assume state power in Pakistan, and with it a nuclear capability on the basis of which to project "Islamic" power; overturning the Saudi regime, dependent as it is on the US, and thereby control of much of the world's oil supply.² The question is not the probability of the success of this project (probably minimal), but rather its inherently capitalist nature or class content. A nuclear capability (an Islamic bomb), and control of oil, require the very capitalist technology, science, and social relations, against which the Islamists verbally rail, but which is inseparable from Islamism as a political movement and project.

In analyzing Islamism as a political phenomenon it is necessary to focus on three distinct, but inter-related elements: The socio-economic conditions that provide the fertile soil within which such an ideology and political movement can take hold and win popular support; the social classes and strata that are the bearers of this ideology and the cadre and leadership of this movement; the class content of this socio-political phenomenon. The socio-economic conditions that breed Islamism are the impoverishment and desperation of masses of people uprooted from a pre-capitalist or village and artisanal existence by the development of capitalism, even as this latter is incapable of providing employment for a newly urbanized and rapidly growing population condemned to inhabit the shanty-towns around the sprawling capitalist

metropoli -- a mass of people lacking the education without which a life of quasi-permanent unemployment and marginalization is all they have to look forward to. This is the outcome of the trajectory of capitalism in the Third World in general, and the Arab-Islamic world in particular, and it provides the socio-economic conditions for the spread of Islamism. The classes and strata that provide the cadre and leadership of Islamist movements are the petty-bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia. It is not a coincidence if the ideologue and organizer of al Qaeda (bin Laden's chief lieutenant) Ayman al Zawahiri, was a prominent surgeon, a child of a leading family of the Egyptian intelligentsia. While the popular support for Islamism comes from the very poor, the leadership and cadre of this movement is highly educated, a product of the secular world of medicine and engineering, for example.³ Yet the class provenance of the cadre or leadership of a political movement, does not determine its class content. That most crucial element for an analysis of Islamism, as we have argued above, is capitalist in its class nature; an expression or manifestation of capitalism in determinate historical and cultural conditions: the Arab-Islamic world in the epoch of globalized capital and American hegemony. Islamism is the violent and brutal reaction to that hegemony, one that portends mass death or brutal oppression for the populations of that world, an outcome that can only be averted by a class struggle to overthrow the very capitalist social relations that have generated it and of which Islamism is the current local manifestation.

MAC INTOSH

^{1.} All three of these forms of Arab-Islamic nations are integrally linked to the trajectory of capitalism, as it subjects the world to the imperatives of value production: liberal nationalism to the ascendant phase of capitalism; Arab socialism to the Fordist phase of capitalist production; and Islam to the impact of post-Fordism and globalization that now reigns supreme. One question worth pursuing, despite or, perhaps, because of the Communist left's principled opposition to nationalism is whether a subaltern nationalism, a nationalism of the exploited classes, was ever possible; whether a nationalism not integrally bound to the project of capitalism was ever possible. For example, how does one view the Indian rebellion of 1857, the war waged by Shamil and the Chechens against Tsarist Russia in the 19th century, to take but two examples? Were these manifestations of the subaltern classes? Did they not lie outside the ambit of capital? Were they "progressive" or reactionary? Marx himself seems to have changed his views towards the end of his life, in his correspondence with Vera Zasulich. It is an issue worth examining, though it does not change the fact that the successive forms of modern Arab-Islamic nationalism which we are here considering are all manifestations of capital.

^{2.} This is also the case with the states on Afghanistan's northern border, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, all of which are near the oil-rich Caspian sea, and all of which

have their own Islamist movements with close ties to al-Qaeda.

^{3.} It should be no surprise that the leader of Islamism in Jordan, Laith Shubaylat, is a former head of the engineers syndicate. These are the classes and strata from which the leadership and cadre of nationalist movements are typically drawn -- when those movements were liberal, when they were secular, and now when they are Islamist.

Visit our Website :
Multimania.com/ippi

THE RATIONALITY OF (SELF)-DESTRUCTION

This article attempts to place the events since September 11 in the context of global capitalism's deeper economic and political trends.

A DÉJÀ VU

The discussion in the American media on how to fight terrorism, inasmuch as it exists, reminds one a lot of the debate on how to fight crime that went on here for years.

This was, after all, the country that had by far the highest crime-rate of all the highly developed ones. It still is, yet the crime problem does not evoke any more heated arguments in Congress or on TV. The reason is that the position that there is only one way to deal with crime, which is to repress it harshly, has become the consensus, at least among those who control the media. There are of course still a few voices that claim that the higher crime figures among blacks and Hispanics point to a relation between crime and the living conditions in the impoverished inner cities. But even those have grown quiet, for fear of being accused of 'coddling the criminals' and seeking to justify their depraved behavior, or even of insulting the many blacks and Hispanics in the inner cities who respect the law. Besides, the steep decline of the crime-rates in the second half of the nineties seems to confirm the effectiveness of the punitive strategy. It appears indeed that putting more than two million people behind bars, beefing up the police, building prisons at a feverish pace, stepping up the tempo of executions and upholding a *zero tolerance* policy towards petty crime, have made American cities safer. Remarkably enough though, crime rates declined about equally in cities where a strict zero tolerance policy was applied such as New York and in those where that was not the case, such as in Los Angeles, where the police department wrestled for years with a debilitating internal crisis.

Criminologists explained this by pointing to two other factors; one economic - in periods of substantially declining

unemployment the crime rate has always gone down in the US- the other demographic - there is a temporary decline in the population of teenagers and young adults. Crime, like all social phenomena, results from possibility and necessity. The necessity arises from a lack of alternatives for millions for whom there's no room in the productive system and from the fact that it cannot be expected that all this youthful energy, all this testosterone, will just sit there quietly without seeking some escape. The possibility comes from the presence of huge extra-legal markets and the rising demand for its commodities such as drugs, especially at times when an economic downturn exposes the lack of perspectives and emphasizes both the alienation, and the moral corruptness, of capitalist society. The criminal is not an anti-capitalist rebel. On the contrary, he seeks his place within the system and follows its rules, its ethics and purpose. That is true not just for the capitalist investing in extra-legal markets but also for the young unemployed trying to make a buck as a drug runner. As the review *Against Sleep and Nightmare* notes, "For capitalists, drugs are simply another commodity to be managed. Unfortunately, there is nothing stranger about a poor black boy selling crack than there is about a rich white boy repairing cars; while the black boy is breaking the law, both of them are becoming part of the system. With America decaying the way it is, more and more commodities that keep the system running also destroy the people that are in it, especially the poor, the blacks and the browns." (ASAN #2, p.15)

Indeed, they destroy especially those people who are themselves excess commodities, who can't sell their labor power and therefore have no value for capitalist society. The tendency of capitalism to destroy excess commodities, excess variable and constant capital, is fundamental to the system because they are obstacles to capital's valorization. It expresses itself in the lives of "excess" population by fostering hatred, self-hatred and despair. As a message on a T-shirt popular with black youths in Detroit during the height of the murder-epidemic in the early '90's proclaimed: "Shoot me - I'm already dead".

DEAD ALREADY

“Shoot me –I’m already dead”. It’s a slogan with which young men fighting in Africa’s bloody civil wars or suicide-bombers in Palestine could identify. The conditions which American criminologists describe as the perfect incubator of crime – growing unemployment and despair, combined with a demographic curve that bulges with an overabundance of young men- are also those that characterize the countries where terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda find their support and recruit their suicide-candidates. Of course, the leaders of these gangs are not desperate paupers. Bin Laden is a very rich man, as leaders of criminal gangs usually are. The capital at their disposal is a necessary ingredient for them to fulfil the role trust upon them by the deep-seeded need of capitalism in crisis for self-destruction. However different they may be, they express that need just as much as drug gangs in America’s inner cities. There is the same combination of excess variable capital (population) and excess financial capital which breaks national or international law because it must challenge the existing order which denies it the room to fulfil its capitalist destiny, that is to valorize by seeking profit and power.

After the attacks of September 11, and later again when the bio-terrorist anthrax-attacks began, there was momentary confusion about the identity of the perpetrators. There was talk that elements in the American ultra-right might be responsible, or Japanese terrorists or groups directed by Iraq or Iran or the Israeli Mossad or even that the US itself might have organized this or allowed it to happen to reap the results. None of this was proven (neither, so far, has the role of Bin Laden) and much of it was just silly conspiracy theory. But it was interesting because it showed how exchangeable the motives for such outrageous acts of destruction are. The motives –because Allah wants it, for love of country, for the defense of our race, for the national interest, for Jerusalem or even for the revolution- are really secondary to the goal of destruction itself, even if the perpetrators themselves may not realize this. Because they express less a quest for whichever chimera has captured their imagination than the need of capital for destruction, the fact that their violence may be counter-productive to their stated goal or may cause their own destruction, cannot stop them. Thus, the presumably Islamist terrorists flying into the World Trade Center did not only willingly destroy themselves but neither did they care about the easily foreseeable misery their acts would bring upon countless Muslims around the world. We see the same urge for (self)destruction rising around the globe and especially in those areas where capital is seeing its actual or future profits melt away. Whether it takes the form of civil war, ethnic or tribal war, religious war, war of liberation or of revenge or of conquest, or any combination thereof, the ultimate goal always is death and destruction itself. Regimes such as Iraq’s celebrate even their bloodiest defeats as great victories. It is no coincidence that at times

when the need for devalorization creates a mounting urge for destruction, madmen like Hitler and Saddam Hussein are at the helm of states. Capitalism in our times has so far avoided its crisis producing a sudden, paralyzing shock as it did in 1929, or that its urge to (self)destruction triggers world war. But it has eliminated neither tendency and both are mounting.

THE DOUBLE MOVEMENT OF GLOBALIZATION

They are linked. The conditions for a more violent, destructive world are rising because capitalism’s crisis has deepened. And the way in which it has deepened in recent years has been marked by what is being called globalization. As we wrote earlier, globalization follows a double movement. As the technological, political and other obstacles to the global integration of capital diminish, the world becomes more and more linked in a high tech, high productivity global economy. But precisely because of its high productivity, capitalism also accelerates the expulsion of capital from the world economy; it makes countless productive forces superfluous, unable to valorize themselves and forces a steep devalorization, creating in the process an ever more gigantic army of unnecessary labor power (there are now close to 2 billion unemployed) and concentrating masses of uprooted, repressed, frustrated young people in hellish cities.

We are not for or against globalization per se. It is simply an historic fact and not a policy choice. It is not a break with the past but a continuation of an immanent process that capitalism has undergone since its very beginning. We have seen an acceleration of that process, but it’s just capitalism following the path of capitalism, described by Marx 150 years ago. Those who protest globalization as such, pander to the illusion that capitalism could be different, turned back to an earlier stage of its course, which is naïve at best. Or that capitalism could be reined in, made more humane, more concerned about its pernicious “side-effects”, which is what the apologists of capitalism say to a public that realizes something is seriously wrong. Bill Clinton, of all people, said to such a public after the attacks that the fundamental problem is poverty and that now the task was to make globalization work for the poor. Yes, the man who presided over this globalization, and the pauperization it sowed, and the devaluation of the capital of most countries of the world that it caused, said this with a straight face. We knew already that shamelessness was his middle name. Apparently he still has a role to play as spokesman for the system, but he surely knows that globalization will go on as before, devalorizing the capital of the weaker countries, demobilizing productive forces, spreading misery everywhere

THE ADVANTAGES OF WAR

Bush, of course, is not talking about making globalization work for the poor, he has a war to win. Just like in “the war on crime”, there is a consensus in the ruling class that there can be but one strategy to deal with terrorism: off with their heads. Let our bombs and missiles, and our special forces, decapitate them. Since they attacked the US itself, the fact that the prosecutor, the judge and the executor are one and the same is no objection and neither is the death of uncounted civilians who happen to be in the way. (Pentagon spokesman: It’s not like we do it on purpose. Quite the contrary: we realize that “collateral damage” is bad public relations. But we’ve run out of military targets and our bombs have to fall somewhere. So don’t mind if one lands on a hospital or a Red Cross Center. It’s the fault of the Russians who left too little for us to hit).

One important function of the “war on crime” was to provide the excuse for a never-ending expansion of police powers and –forces. The ‘war on terrorism’ allows the state to bolster its repressive capacity even more. It’s interesting to note that, two months after the attacks of September 11, no new laws have been passed by the US Congress regarding airport security which, apart from the useless presence of some National Guard troops in the departure halls, remains almost as loose as it was before. Yet new laws expanding police powers have been passed with great hurry, often with not even a semblance of debate. It is also telling that the expanded powers these laws give to the various police forces to investigate, tap the internet, break into homes, arrest and detain suspects in secrecy, etc, are not limited to investigations related to terrorism.

Bush set the tone in the very first days by declaring that a new global war had begun and that in this war “you are either with us or with the terrorists”. It was a warning, a demand for discipline, as much from citizens within the country as from countries around the world. The whole totalitarian war climate served for capitalism to tighten its grip on society. What Bush really said was: You’re either for US capital or you will be treated as terrorists. Soon after that, workers defending their wages in Minnesota were viciously attacked in the media, which stated that, by striking, the workers were “choosing the side of the terrorists”. All workers fighting for their class interests, or anybody protesting global capitalism, can expect to be tarred with the same brush.

A NEW GRAND EXCUSE

But there’s more. Since the end of the cold war, US capital and its allies had lacked an excuse for the continuing expansion of the gigantic American military machine, for the presence of hundreds of American military bases around the world and of hundreds of thousands of American troops outside US borders. There were the “rogue

states” (rogues they are, but so are all the others) but even combined, they amounted to a ridiculously feeble excuse. When the US sent a fraction of its war machine in action against one of them in the Gulf war or later in Kosovo, it was like shooting fish in a barrel. Now, US capital hopes that in “the global war against terrorism” it has found a new grand excuse, a rationale to impose global discipline, to force universal acceptance of the US’ right to intervene anywhere in the defense of its interests and to expand its awesome military strength to even higher levels. Since there is no end in sight to the “war on terrorism” (possibly not in our lifetime, Vice-President Cheney said) the grand excuse remains valid. How well it may work in the long term remains to be seen but it certainly corresponds to an essential ideological need of US capital.

There can be little doubt that this war and terror machine can and will obtain a military victory in Afghanistan. But what will it mean? Certainly not that terrorism will disappear or even diminish. With every new proof of its dominance, US capital creates more resentment from weaker and weakening competitors. The more efficiently it can kill and destroy from a safe distance, the more it becomes militarily invulnerable, the more rational it becomes for its enemies to search for its remaining weak spots and to use terrorism, because it’s practically the only way left to challenge US capital tightening grip. That’s the necessity-part, the possibility is provided by globalization: with all aspects of capitalism ‘going global’, why wouldn’t terrorism?

FORTRESS AMERICA

Terrorism will not be defeated because the conditions that feed it will continue to grow. The deepening of capitalism’s crisis assures that there will be more excess population, more excess capital, more urge to destroy. US capital knows that and does not trust on its war-making capacity alone to protect itself. Just as millions of rich Americans express their doubts on the long term effectiveness of the ‘war on crime’ (which is quite rational, since both economic and demographic trends point to a rise of crime in the near future) by “protecting” themselves in gated communities, guarded with cameras and electronic alarm systems, patrolled by armed guards with dogs, walled and barred by checkpoints behind which no uninvited visitors can pass, so the US tries, with an array of security measures, to regain its lost sense of invulnerability. It has been estimated that it will spend up to 1500 billions of dollars in the next five years to protect the food supply from agro-terrorism, the mail from bio-terrorism and so on and so on. Not even included in this mind boggling figure are the additional military expenditures, such as the more than 100 billion expected to be spent on missile defense, the ‘Son of Star Wars’ which must make the illusion of invulnerability from “the Evildoers” complete.

THE COMPULSION TO DEVALORIZE

All these unproductive expenditures undoubtedly will worsen the global economic crisis. All the additional inspections and border controls furthermore undercut a great advantage of globalization, namely the faster turnover of capital, a factor Marx mentioned as counter-acting the tendential fall of the rate of profit. But while capitalism is blaming the terrorist attacks for the current worsening of the global economy, it is clear that the causes are much deeper. Despite the gigantic unfulfilled human needs in the world, despite the huge need for food and housing, and all sorts of things, from the capitalist point of view there is too little effective demand for food and housing and all sorts of things. In short, there is too large an excess of capacity to meet the existing effective demand for them. The further evolution of capitalism, that is, the continuation of globalization, will only exacerbate this.

In order to keep its value, capital must, directly or indirectly, lead to the creation of more value. If it loses this capacity, because its yield is too small to remain competitive or because its market shrinks or both, it must lose its value. That is obvious for the means of production (constant and variable capital) and also for capital in the form of all sorts of commodities on the market, which become worthless if unsold. But it is also true for financial capital and all assets whose value depends on their ability to be quickly converted into money (stocks, art, real estate, etc). Yet their price can rise steeply precisely because the universal urge of capital to escape devalorization by seeking refuge in the financial assets of the strongest countries of the world creates a huge demand for them. Their relative attractiveness tends to grow, because globalization extends the reach of the strongest capitals, their access to markets and to devalorized, dirt-cheap labor power, and because only the strongest capitals have the means to constantly develop new commodities that escape overproduction and enjoy semi-monopolistic market-conditions which yield surplus profits. The further course of globalization will continue to sharpen the unequal development. We have warned before that the state of global capitalism cannot be understood by looking only at its strongest parts. It would be a huge mistake to see in the stabilization of American and European stock exchanges, when it occurs, a proof that capitalism has weathered its crisis. This crisis does not develop linearly, but its overall downward trend is clear. The telltale sign of how it continues to erode the world economy will be the devalorization of capital outside the strongest countries, the swelling of an irresistible global deflationary trend. Capital in more and more places will become unprofitable, population unusable, financial capital desperately seeking for ways to escape the downward pull, political structures seeking to calm the waves or ride them to more power, by channeling them into crusades and other Jihads. More and

more this deflationary trend, this tendency of capital to lose its value, will creep up to the strongest countries, to the center of the system and bring capitalism's social contradictions, the widening gulf between its interests and those of humanity to the fore.

This is another way of saying that capitalism was designed for conditions of scarcity and cannot operate without it. Faced with structural overproduction, the system inevitably generates the tendency to forcibly return to its natural conditions of scarcity. The more the problem is exacerbated, that is, the more capital exists that requires valorization and the less new value is globally created to meet that requirement, the stronger this destructive tendency becomes.

While every historic event is different and the future will not simply repeat the past, each time an underlying need for the devalorization of global capital arises, a perverse harmony develops between this rising need and the rising latent violence in capitalist society, the rising use by capitalism of nationalism and other isms that are all aimed at channeling the violence against a hated "other". That was so before the two world wars and it is again so today.

THE INSANE LOGIC OF CAPITALISM

Capitalism, as even its strongest admirers affirm, is all about the pursuit of profit. This seemingly has the advantage of being a rational goal with a rational path leading to it, and thus of fostering rational behavior. This in contrast to the seemingly irrational behavior of the terrorists, portrayed in the media as mad monsters, wild fanatics who want to return the world to pre-capitalist times. We have already made the point, and it is elaborated in other articles in this issue, that they are really neither anti-capitalistic nor irrational but an expression of capital's attempts to make room for itself. Their means are no more irrational or cynical than those of American or those of other leading capitals. American National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice said in the CBS-program

"60 minutes" that Bush sees this as a war of Good against Evil and that any rational person has to see it that way because "with someone like Bin Laden who sacrifices the lives of innocents for his own cause, you can't see it any other way". Some time ago on the same program Rice's predecessor as Iron Lady at the helm of Washington's foreign policy was asked a question about a UN-report that said half a million children died as a result of sanctions against Iraq. Her answer: "We think the price is worth it".

So there you have a few similarities in an otherwise asymmetrical war: in which both camps fight Satan with God on their side and both generously spill other people's blood when, for their own cause, the price is worth it.

It is completely rational for US capital to launch a war in response to the attacks of September 11. It is rational for it

to arrest thousands in search of its enemies, to bomb countries for that purpose, to send out its armies all over the world to guard its access to oil and all its other interests and assets. It has so much to protect, so many reasons to bomb and sow terror, and it will get more of them as time goes by. Its power and profit are inseparable and it is rational that it will do whatever it takes to defend them. This sets it on a course from which it will not deviate because it will only be following the logic, the rationality, of capitalism. A course which, because of the means at its disposal, threatens to create much more destruction than terrorists can ever accomplish.

The very trajectory of capitalism in this epoch inexorably culminates in nihilism. This is one of the clearest signs that capitalism has outlived its usefulness: what is rational for capital, has become completely insane for humanity. This is not only true for the economy, with its absurd contrast between capacity and need, but also for the political spectacle, the entire death-worshipping so-called civilization.



CUT OFF THE ROOTS

That is something which many of the protesters against the war don't want to see, especially the pacifists. Although I have to admit that in an anti-war demonstration at Union Square in Manhattan I came across some who held up signs saying "Forget Nationalism, Adopt Humanism", I saw many others waving American or other flags and calling themselves 'true patriots'. There were still others who waived flags for the other side, who claimed there is but one bad capitalism, American "super-imperialism", so they supported the Taliban, Saddam Hussein or any regime that's anti-American, regardless of how brutally repressive. In their own way, they too express the system's urge for destruction.

Most protesters I met, dream that capitalism will abandon its wanton ways if only decent people get to the top, so let's elect so-and-so, etc. They imagine a world of countries peacefully living together and respectfully trading with each other, all achievable with a little goodwill from everybody. They don't seem to realize that global exploitation, crisis and war are not just bad policies that can be replaced by good ones. They don't see how political power, military might, and economic exploitation form an unbreakable whole. Just like many ecologists and anti-globalists they think that the worst aspects of capitalism can be chopped off. They refuse to see that there is no worst part: it's a whole and it is dragging humanity to ever-greater catastrophes. Protesting the violence of capitalism or the effects of globalization cannot lead anywhere, unless it starts from the recognition that it is capitalism itself which has to go.

Sander

(11/11 - 'Armistice Day' - 2001)

Leaflets on the Terrorist Attacks and the War in Afghanistan

We publish below the position of our own group, as well as those of other revolutionaries who participate in the Anglophone and Francophone discussion networks (see IP 38) on the terrorist attacks in the US and on the war in Afghanistan.

The reality of the "first war of the twenty-first century"

The terrorists and their enemies have alot in common, in the first place their disdain for human life, their willingness to engage in mass-murder in order to promote their power and profits. Does anyone doubt that the US, in its response to the attacks, is willing to kill far more innocents than perished in the World Trade Center?

The "first war of the twenty-first century" is a capitalist war, that is to say, its causes, origins, unfolding and goals are integrally linked to the monstrous trajectory of capitalism as a mode of production, a system, a civilization. While this may seem to be an abstraction, inadequate to the horror of the destruction wrought on Tuesday, September 11, without an understanding of this link between capitalism and the carnage that we have experienced, we will be trapped within the "logic" of this war, without a way to resist it. This link can be seen in three ways.

The roots, the socio-economic seedbed for the terrorist attack on New York, and the death of thousands of innocent civilians, most of them workers, lie in the rage and hatred born of a civilization that produces misery, alienation, humiliation, and death for an ever-increasing mass of the world's population. That, and a sense of powerlessness, is the source of the anger, the visceral loathing for America, for the West, and its symbols, which has propelled elements of the

professional strata in the Islamic world to recruit armies for this war, to mobilize the frustrations and desperation of masses of Muslims for a "Jihad," or at least to see in the carnage of New York a blow against what they conceive to be the source of their misery, material and spiritual. While those conditions exist, and are growing at an exponential rate, throughout those parts of the world which capitalism and its global economy have turned into vast shanty-towns, it is -- for the moment -- in the Muslim world where the specific cultural and political bases for such a war have coalesced.

Because the global economy can produce far more than can be sold at a profit, the more it develops, the more people are expelled from productive activity as so much excess productive capacity. While global capital creates impoverishment everywhere, in the vast expanses of much of what used to be designated the "Third World" it has already literally created a death-world where millions are condemned to starvation, civil war, and an existence devoid of any hope. Ancient, pre-capitalist modes of production and cultures are relentlessly being destroyed by the "progress" of global capital. But this does not result in the incorporation of the mass of the population into the new capitalist economic, cultural, and social relations. Rather, it condemns the mass of the population to a miserable existence in the vast new shanty-towns, where unemployment, disease and death are the hallmarks of the urban life that has arisen on the destruction of the pre-capitalist world of the farm and village. So long as

"progress" takes this form, so long as capital presides over the economic, cultural, and political life of humanity, these conditions will grow -- and with them the certainty that the violence and hatred they breed will spawn nationalist political movements that will seek out targets in the industrial and technological metropolises of which the World Trade Center was the symbol.

The political movements that are mobilizing this rage and hatred, Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda, Hamas, Hizbollah, the Taliban, do not represent a reactionary movement seeking to recreate the village world of a -- largely -- mythic Islamic past. Rather, they embody an ideology and practice that is as modern as that of Nazism, Stalinism, Maoism, or Pol-Potism, an ideology and practice that seeks to challenge the global hegemony of American or Western capital, against which it will wage war with suicide bombers today, and if it succeeds in creating an "Islamic" state in the Muslim world, with modern armies and the same chemical and nuclear weapons with which the West has armed itself. Neither Islamic nor fundamentalist, these political movements and proto-states, have racialized Islam, turned it into a matter of race and blood, and turned difference into a racial or biological Other, all of the elements of which are enemies to be exterminated or reduced to the status of outcasts. Within the "pure" state it seeks to create, women are defined as biologically inferior, Hindus must wear the yellow badge, and the "Christian-Jewish crusaders" must be exterminated. The ideology and practice embodied by the Taliban bears a far greater resemblance to Nazi Germany or Pol-Pot's Cambodia than to the Islamic past. Racialization, the designation of segments of the population as the Other, a bacillus or virus to be exterminated, is not an atavistic revival of a pre-capitalist past but the dark side of the trajectory of capitalism, which had already made the twentieth century into a charnel house. This racialization, inseparable from nationalism, is the product of capitalism as a civilization. That it is embodied in leaders dressed in robes and turbans does not make it any less a manifestation of that very civilization, any less the noxious product of it.

This first war of the twentieth-first century will be a capitalist war too in the way it will be waged by the US and its allies. The face of war was transformed by capitalism in the twentieth century, first in World War One when masses of conscripts, primarily workers and peasants, were slaughtered on the battlefields, and then in World War Two when the civilian population constituted the bulk of the victims -- a result of the technologies of mass destruction, and the ideologies by which their use was justified. In mobilizing its resources to crush its enemies today, we can anticipate that the US will move in the following ways. Once it designates those regimes that harbor the terrorist leadership, it may unleash assaults with high tech weapons. The inevitable result of such tactics will be massive civilian deaths and casualties in the countries attacked; far greater than the five thousand inflicted by the terrorists in New York on September 11. Such a tactic, however, may make the situation of Muslim regimes allied to the US untenable, an outcome which the US administration seeks to avoid at all costs. Thus, the US may

prefer to wage this war, at least at the outset, by assisting Arab and Muslim regimes to crush "their own" Islamic fundamentalists, and thereby both assure the stability of those regimes, now threatened by the same groups that struck in New York, and deny the terrorists the safe havens on which they depend. Musharraf in Pakistan, Arafat in Palestine, Mubarak in Egypt, the Generals in Algeria, all are threatened by Al Qaeda and the multitude of groups to which it is linked. As the war waged by the Algerian military against the Armed Islamic Group shows, such a war deliberately targets civilians and depends on state terror for any success. It is just such an orgy of state terror, backed by the US, that we can expect to see in this first war of the twenty-first century -- that and the use of high-tech weaponry designed to rain death and destruction on civilian populations. To wage this war, The American state will seek to galvanize the population with appeals to patriotism behind which a militarization of society will occur, one in which any opposition to war will be equated with support for terrorism. At the same time, the global recession, which had already begun, will also be blamed on terrorism, uncoupled from the very trajectory of capitalism which has produced it. The atrocity perpetrated on September 11, and the atrocities to come in this first war of the twenty-first century, are the product of the profit-system, of capitalism, and will only disappear when that system does too.

Those who grasp the link between the carnage in New York and capitalism must oppose and resist this war, even if they recognize that the terrorists who unleashed it are themselves the barbarous personification of the very same civilization that has produced the rage and despair from which they have arisen. We must denounce the ideological cloak under which this war is camouflaged. On the side of the US and its "allies," the present campaign is presented as an action of legitimate defense, one that is even humanitarian, inasmuch as it seeks the liberation and feeding of the Afghan people. Those same arguments were wielded at the time of the earlier interventions of the US against Iraq or Yugoslavia: the liberation of Kuwait, which had been invaded, eliminating the "Tyrant of Bagdad" or Milosovic, and the defense of the Albanian minority. It is a bloody lie, aimed at silencing any opposition to a war that packages itself as "just." On the side of the Islamists, the religious verbiage hides economic and political interests opposed to the US, but which are merely the same dark side of the trajectory of capitalism which has already made the twentieth century into a charnel house.

The capitalist system does not produce wealth for the benefit of humanity, but rather for profit and to better struggle against competitors. That very trajectory compels it to hurl an ever-growing mass of workers into poverty and marginalization; to grab and exploit all possible sources of energy and all the wealth of the planet, while engaged in a ferocious exploitation of the affected population and armed interventions whenever its economic interests are threatened.

It is precisely the social class that bears the brunt of the inhumanity of this system, and in its most acute form, and which is not linked to any particular interest tied to this system, that can overthrow it and create the bases for a new

society. That social class is the proletariat, a universal class, which has no *raison d'être*, no means to assure its very subsistence, but the sale of its labor-power; which produces not for its own needs, but just so the capitalist system can continue its incessant quest for profit. Even if proletarians today have trouble seeing what makes them a global class, it is upon them that the hopes for the very survival of humanity rests. The alternative "capitalist barbarism OR the advent of a new society" appears ever-more clearly, and the violence being unleashed today is just one more painful illustration of that reality.

Internationalist Perspective

September 2001

Fear

Fear of terrorism

Fear of chemical and nuclear explosions

Fear of war

Fear of unemployment

Fear of mad cow disease

Fear of an ecological disaster

After the massive horror of the Twin Towers, we are now facing the specter of retaliation against Afghanistan by the first army of the world. We do not yet know what type of action Sheriff Bush and his administration will take. We can be assured, however, knowing the lack of delicacy the US army usually demonstrates in their international police operations, that the local populations will be plunged into extreme distress, directly or indirectly provoking their death. To the thousands of unfortunate civilians killed at the World Trade Center and in Washington will be added many

more new innocent victims, no more responsible for what is happening to them -- or what has happened to them -- than the other victims in New York, Pristina, or Baghdad.

Barbarism follows barbarism.

Who are Responsible ?

For the carnage of September 11, the finger points to the gang of Osama bin Laden.

It is very plausible that he or some other Islamic terrorist gang, Shiite or Sunni, is responsible for the attack. The leaders of these movements deserve only our contempt. They present themselves as mystical gurus, obsessed with god. Are they really what they say they are? Or rather are they acting to better satisfy their appetite for personal power? It is not difficult to imagine, but even if they were sincere believers, we cannot forget that the people of the church, the synagogue or the mosque of yesterday and today have shown and will show again that they can be the bloodiest servants of the state, Islamic or others. We remember Khomeini, the extremist rabbis in Israel, and the genocidal priests of Rwanda.

Truly, these criminals -- this is the name they deserve -- take a big part of the population of the world hostage, now

Muslims who have been left outside of the industrial and technological civilization of capitalism. It's not difficult for these criminals to exploit the feelings of injustice and the impulse to revolt of these people who die of hunger, misery, local wars, without any prospect for a future, powerless. In Kabul, Jerusalem, Sudan, Egypt, bin Laden and his gang fanaticize these desperate individuals before transforming them into human bombs for suicidal and terrorist enterprises which have no future except for those so-called Islamic gangs that preach to and unleash them ... This is the first level of responsibility but not the highest level.

The Primary Executioner is World Capitalism

The primary party, the executioner in charge of the deaths in New York and in Washington – or those that happened the same day in Palestine – is the world capitalist system. What provides the groundwork for the development of Islamic terrorism is the fundamental incapacity for the capitalist mode of production to manage, in any other than a disastrous manner, the natural and technical human resources of the planet. For the past twenty years the development of Islamism has been one of the illustrations of the incapacity of world capitalism to deepen the economic and ideological integration of vast regions. Since the economic crisis of the 80's, we have even seen a regression of this integration in a big part of the world. All the cynicism contained in the antiterrorist "holy war" explodes like a bomb when we see that George Bush, followed by his allies' world wide, is leading it in the name of "justice, liberty and the progressive values of the West".

Vile hypocrites

It's these very same crusaders, with the United States leading them, who, yesterday, set-up, fashioned, formed and armed the terrorists whom they are now chasing.. Osama bin Laden, at the time of the war between the Red army and the Afghan resistance, and even after, in the struggle between the Taliban and Massoud, had been used and protected by the United States. They, who provided high-tech weapons to the bloody Taliban, have closed their eyes to the regime of terror that these people exercised on the population from the capital in Kabul. It is "Uncle Sam" and his allies, Western or Arab, who, in 1990, turned Saddam Hussein into the devil, after giving him all the fire power imaginable in his war against Khomeinist Iran, the first scourge of this era, when the tyrant of Baghdad then seemed to be, for the West, an interlocutor, of course lacking democracy, but non religious and even a little bit socialist (then leader of the Baath party). No. We have no moral lesson to learn from these lying criminals.

They say they want to eradicate terrorism throughout the world. But terrorism in all epochs, especially in capitalism, is a constant tool of the internal and foreign policies of state entities. In order to decree criminal laws against social agitators – that is how they phrase it -- the capitalist leaders encourage terrorist attacks and even fabricate these attacks. It has been acknowledged, for example, that, in 1969, the Italian security agencies had pulled the strings for the bloody attack at the piazza Fontana, in Rome, later blaming it on anarchists.

About the WTC, a parallel was made with Pearl Harbor. Several authors have hypothesized that the Pentagon was perfectly aware of the intention of the Imperial navy of Japan to bomb the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, but they let it happen because the White House needed a psychological shock in order to mobilize the people of the United States behind World War II. It is only a hypothesis, not a proof, but it is consistent with the logic of the state. It is the same with the obscure affair, in 1964, when American ships were said to have been attacked by the forces of the Vietcong's general Giap, which became the argument that US president Lyndon Johnson used for the intervention of American GI's in Indochina.

All the capitalist states are in fact the real terrorists. When terrorism originates from less powerful states or from movements which aspire to state control (see IRA, ETA, the Corsican nationalist mafia, etc.) it is stigmatized by the bigger states that condemn the expertise its inferiors have with weapons of terror. What? Vile attacks on the twin towers of lower Manhattan? Odious, of course, but is it more terroristic than the atomic bombs dropped on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which were not military targets, but filled only with civilians? Than the incendiary bombs dropped by the English RAF on Dresden in 1945? Than Hitler's concentration camps? Than Stalin's Gulag? Than the attacks on villages in Vietnam, wiped out by the US Air Force? Than social-liberal (or vice versa) France, when it gave African dictators the means to perpetrate genocide in Rwanda, in Zaire?

The truth of their lies

For what purpose are we using anti-terrorism in our beautiful "civilized" countries against bin Laden? In order to adopt measures to prevent the infiltration of foreign terrorists onto "our" soil? Yes, certainly, but especially to reinforce the already hypertrophied arsenal of the internal police force. And what is the intention? Outwitting Islamic agents? Maybe, but above all, to control the social expressions of rebellion against the established bourgeois order. Haven't we heard people, like Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi in relationship to the "anti-globalization" demonstrators, already spreading the idea that certain forms

or radical critique of capitalism can be compared to terrorism? Here is how they shamelessly exploit the victims of the Twin Towers. One of the more immediate manifestations of the association of Blair, Schroeder or Chirac, in the crusade led by Bush has been the move to consolidate and reinforce the European legal-police apparatus.

Could there be only moral and justifiable intentions to the military expedition in Afghanistan? Come on! Many other and more important motives exist. At least three:

-just as the establishment of permanent military bases on the shores of the Persian Gulf and in old Yugoslavia followed the operation against Saddam Hussein, in 1990, and Milosevic at the end of the 90's, the deployment of the US Army in Central Asia is probably the prelude to a solid military installation in this part of the world. The United States, which plays the arrogant role of world policeman, was not yet established there militarily even though it is an important region, in the proximity of four countries possessing nuclear arms: Pakistan, India, China and Russia, and bordering Iran and the republics of the south of the old USSR, seats of potentially extremely complex conflicts.

-this same area, by the Caspian Sea, contains very important oil fields, the development of which, notably pipeline routes, constitutes a basis for the nurturing the tensions between the local states.

-finally, there is a third aspect to consider. It is the need of the United States to reaffirm, through a military expedition, that they are the only ones capable of undertaking such an operation, thereby reinforcing its authority as the dominant power on the planet, against any potential challenge from the countries of the European Union. The United States cannot exclusively count on its economic power in order to establish its leadership. In the Afghani situation today, as yesterday during the Gulf war, all the capitalist powers have a common interest in "securing" those zones which contain the oil derricks and, because of this, to support the military operations of Uncle Sam, even though he will keep a firm hand on the faucet from which the black gold flows. Nonetheless, beyond this momentary consensus, the European powers, Japan, China, India, etc., take every opportunity to play their own diplomatic or economic cards and to try to reduce if not to contest the world supremacy of the United States. In this way new conflicts will inevitably arise.

We are all hostages of capitalism

Bin Laden and his ilk take hostage populations in what was once called the Third World. This is certainly the case. But a glaring, though perhaps not so extreme an inequality, in the distribution of the fruits of human labor is also found

elsewhere. The disadvantaged of the so-called capitalist eldorados are prisoners of the capitalist machine, no less than the masses of the Third world. Those who barely had time to pick up some crumbs during the short period of economic growth in the 90's are now threatened by the horror of a new recession. And here we have another bold capitalist usage for the attacks in New York and Washington. The kamikazes-airliners are designated to take responsibility for an economic recession, which would have happened anyway. Because of the terrorists, the proletarians of the United States and elsewhere must now accept sudden layoffs, being thrown onto the street, increasing the number of the marginalized, as proof of their devotion to the god Capital, as a sign of their economic patriotism. We must consent to play our part in order to make the stock market happy. Disgusting!

Capitalism, a world of generalized fear

What? The fight of the Western world against the Orient? The fight of the good progressives against the evil retrogrades? They are telling us that we should swallow this. What kind of imbeciles do they think we are? Here is the plague; there is the cholera: there is no choice to be made between them. The world is all capitalist and is everywhere unlivable. Even when we don't die of famine, when misery hides behind designer jeans, whether we are exploited workers with a job to our name, or unemployed, we live in fear. What an anxiety-provoking paradox: we are living in the middle of a vast assortment of technology, a huge amount of sophisticated equipment, and even if we benefit a little from the fruits of our labor, we are afraid of the noxious chemicals in our food, afraid of genetic experiments, of mad cow disease, of aids and thousands of other dangers that follow the uncontrolled race for profit that animates capitalism.

With the illusion of being protected by technology, we are guinea pigs of the so-called accidents of yesterday -- Seveso, Bhopal or Chernobyl -- and, today, Toulouse (France), with more catastrophes coming in the future. Capitalism has demonstrated an incredible power of development, but is not in control of the forces that it engenders. Its flight forward, as frantic as it is blind, condemns us to a fall. We survive with a more and more palpable fear that the effects of its uncontrolled thrust will come crashing down on our heads with the "surgical precision" of a plane crashing into a skyscraper.

The state has nothing more urgent or pressing to say or to repeat to us today than the "security of the innocent populations". There is no security in capitalism. It is only a vast regime of social insecurity. This is the only kind of globalization we can hope for from capitalism.

Humanity has its back to the wall today, because its future harmonious development demands a radical overthrow of the social order, the seizure of the means of production by the producers themselves in order to satisfy human needs, not profit. This change entails the establishment of a world without borders, without states, without classes, without exploitation, without money. We call it communism knowing that it never existed, even if this word has been perverted, bloodstained, by the monstrosity of Stalinism.

This is a revolution and, as such, does not only depend on individual will but on the action of a social force produced by capitalism and which represents its exact opposite. This social force concentrates **in itself** all the forms of misery and oppression of the system; it has nothing really to lose; it is a global force, not ethnic, not national, not religious (Muslim, Jew, Christian or Buddhist). This force can be a unity, over and above countries and local specificities, by virtue of the way all its members earn their daily bread, and all are engaged in the same struggle against exploitation. This is the multitude of proletarians, the only class capable of expressing all the social, political and cultural demands of all the other categories of exploited populations, from the United States to Afghanistan: Their unification in one general anti-capitalist movement is what is needed.

In the Paris Commune of 1871, in Russia of 1917, in Spain of July 1936, in 1968 in France, in Poland in 1980 and even in the strikes of the oil workers of Khomenist Iran, in 1979, that force has already demonstrated that it was potentially capable of overthrowing or at least threatening the "bourgeois" state. It is still capable of it.

Proletarians of the whole world, it is with us, and with all the poor and other victims that capitalism encompasses, that the future of humanity rests. To accomplish this emancipatory task we must clearly identify ourselves as a class:

- No union sacree against terrorism behind "our" state: that state is still more terroristic than the Islamic mafias.
- No holy alliance with the capitalist bosses; no patriotic duty to save the national capital and the stock market. It is capitalism that accounts for Islamist terrorism and why we are again threatened, or condemned to register at the unemployment office.
- No division between us. Our enemy is not the Arab, Jewish, European, Afghan or American proletariat, but capitalism. We must not mistake the target, but direct our anger well.
- No middle way with capitalism. It is not reformable; it cannot be made peaceful. Not even a hundred years and two world wars, lots of colonial wars, the Russian-Afghan war, the war between Iraq and Iran and, in only the last twelve years, the Gulf war, war in the Caucasus, war in Bosnia, war between Pakistan and India, war in Kosovo... Is this not sufficient proof against the uselessness of the pacifist speeches? Capitalism is war (or terrorism): War on capitalism!

We have doubts about the double talk that they throw at us to justify the crusade against bin Laden. Let's not ponder these ideas alone. Let's discuss them in two's, in five's, in 20's, with buddies at work or at the social sites at which you spend your daily life. Let's discuss the ideas in this text or others in the same spirit.

Some Internationalists

Paris, 5 October 2001

Cercle de discussion de Paris
MBE/38, 69, boulevard Saint-Marcel,
75013 Paris, France

E-mail :cerclediscussionparis@hotmail.com

REFUSE BOTH TERRORISM AND MILITARISM

On September 11th, the world capitalist order slid significantly further into the barbarism which is the only future it is capable of holding out for humanity. Whichever group was behind the horrific, abominable attacks on the USA, they are part and parcel of this capitalist world order. They were not attacks against capitalism, globalization, or 'Western Civilization'. They were, rather, attacks against America, in reprisal for the imperialist activities the U.S. state and ruling class has engaged in, principally, in the Middle East, in the countries considered to belong to the world of Islam.

Whatever 'religious' or political ideological justifications might be offered in 'defense' of those attacks, they only mask the capitalist, indeed, imperialist ambitions of those behind them. They want the USA 'out' of 'their' supposedly Islamic countries, so that they and their allies can control those countries, so that they can exploit the natural resources and the workers found there. If they have the wealth, the resources, and the weaponry to engage in such attacks, then they can only be one more proto-statist capitalist gang, a faction - 'dissident', though they may be - of the ruling class from whichever country they originate. Their motives can only be to strengthen their own power at the expense of the power of the U.S. ruling class.

In response to the attacks, the USA has declared war 'against terrorism'. President Bush said war had been declared against the United States by those behind the three hijacked planes which attacked the World Trade Center Twin Towers in New York City and the Pentagon, near Washington, D.C. on September 11th. Bush claimed, "It's a new type of war. It's going to take a long time to win this war."

But how can the U.S. win a war with such a nebulous enemy as "terrorism"? Hadn't the American state been "at war against terrorism" for the past 30 or so years, with no end in sight, in fact, with all hope of victory long since having vanished? Besides, what are the criteria for deciding that the war is won, or is being won? That terrorism ceases to exist? That will not happen as long as there is a single capitalist state in existence; since every state, within its territory, has organized, armed, military domination over all of its internal

enemies as well as over all of the people of that territory, and such domination can only be enforced by using or *threatening* to use that force against any and all of those it dominates, ... and that is precisely the essence of terrorism. And, as the world's militarily dominant state, the planet's only superpower, the USA is well known-outside of its own borders, at least-to be the world's leading terrorist organization.

Leaving that aside, the various capitalist states of the world will never eliminate the terrorism of the numerous "outlaw", "criminal", or "illegal" terrorist gangs which operate "underground", in the shadows of various different countries, the so-called "rogue states". How can they, as long as they continue to engage in imperialist exploitation and domination, leaving untold misery, deprivation, and despoliation wherever they operate; and as long as there are forces within those subjugated countries espousing "anti-Western" or "anti-imperialist" ideologies with the express purpose of mobilizing the masses to give their labour and their lives for the glory of their nation, of Islam, Allah, or whatever else they can dream up? The USA will, as long as it exists and remains the world's dominant power, always have foreign enemies, including states which are willing, under the circumstances-in particular, of their national interests being dominated and humiliated by those of the U.S.-to harbour, and perhaps even to actively assist, "fugitive" terrorists and their gangs. How will this contradiction be eliminated, short of eliminating the U.S. state itself?

So then Bush and his cronies aren't really serious about a "war on terrorism"? In fact, I believe they are, and it seems certain that they are determined to exact revenge against their enemies on an even larger scale than the destruction of Sept. 11. However, "terrorism" will come to be defined (by the mass media) so loosely that, for example, any group of people, whether anti-globalization protesters or striking workers, who can be deemed to be "threatening the economy" will be classified as "terrorist", and thus vilified by the media and all those who blindly swallow its propaganda. Everyone will be set up to choose sides: EITHER for the state, democratic law and

>>>>continues on page 5

Contents of Recent Issues

Internationalist Perspective No 27

- The new world disorder
- Balance sheet for a new departure: *Internationalist Perspective*
- The world as we see it - points of reference
- Economic aspects of the transition from capitalism to communism
- On 'Paradoxes of materialism' from *Transition: marxism and materialism*

Internationalist Perspective No 28

- Russia doesn't sulk, it collects itself
- A future for Africa ... and for the rest of the world
- Is there a revolutionary perspective?
- The three stages of the concept of decadence
- The economy in the Russian Revolution
- Cracks in the rear-view mirror (Reply to Rose)

Internationalist Perspective No 29

- A new period of struggles has begun
- Behind the current struggles, the need for a new society is raised
- The agony of Bosnia
- The development of the productive forces and the decadence of capitalism
- *Communism has not yet begun* by Claude Bitot (book review)
- The economy in the Russian Revolution (Reply to Sander)

Internationalist Perspective No 30-31

- Editorial
- The ICC: One more step towards the abyss
- Reply to comments on the book *Communism has not yet begun*
- The roots of capitalist crisis: Why the collapse of the world economy is inevitable (Parts One and Two)

Internationalist Perspective No 32-33

- Editorial
- The roots of capitalist crisis: Why the collapse of the world economy is inevitable (Part Three: From decline to collapse)
- Value, decadence and technology: Twelve Theses
- Review: *Nights and Fogs of Revisionism* by Louis Janover

Internationalist Perspective No 34

- ♦ Towards an evaluation of the class struggle today
- ♦ The roots of capitalist crisis: Why the collapse of the world economy is inevitable (Part Four : Globalization's impasse)
- ♦ Towards a new theory of the decadence of capitalism
- ♦ Responding to the ICC

Internationalist Perspective No 35

- Refuse Capitalism's War Logic!
- Deeper into Deadend Street
- The Decadence of Capital and the Development of the productive Forces
- Ideological Obstacles to the Development of the Class Struggle
- Farewell to our Friend and Comrade: Jean Malaquais
- The Chenier Affair: Debate or Intimidation inside the Revolutionary Milieu

Internationalist Perspective No 36

- Profit Kills
- The War in Kosovo
- Refuse Capitalism's War Logic!
- Capitalism and Genocide

Internationalist Perspective No 37

- Boycott them all !
- Order reigns in Grozny...
- Globalization and the historic course
- Promises and pitfalls of 'The Battle of Seattle'
- The roots of the capitalist crisis : The law of value on the world market

Internationalist Perspective No 38

- Towards new forms of class struggle ?
- Globalization of capital and the transformation of the state
- The end of statist containment of the working class
- It's not easy to know what not to do
- A new discussion network has been organized