

Socialist

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OUTLOOK

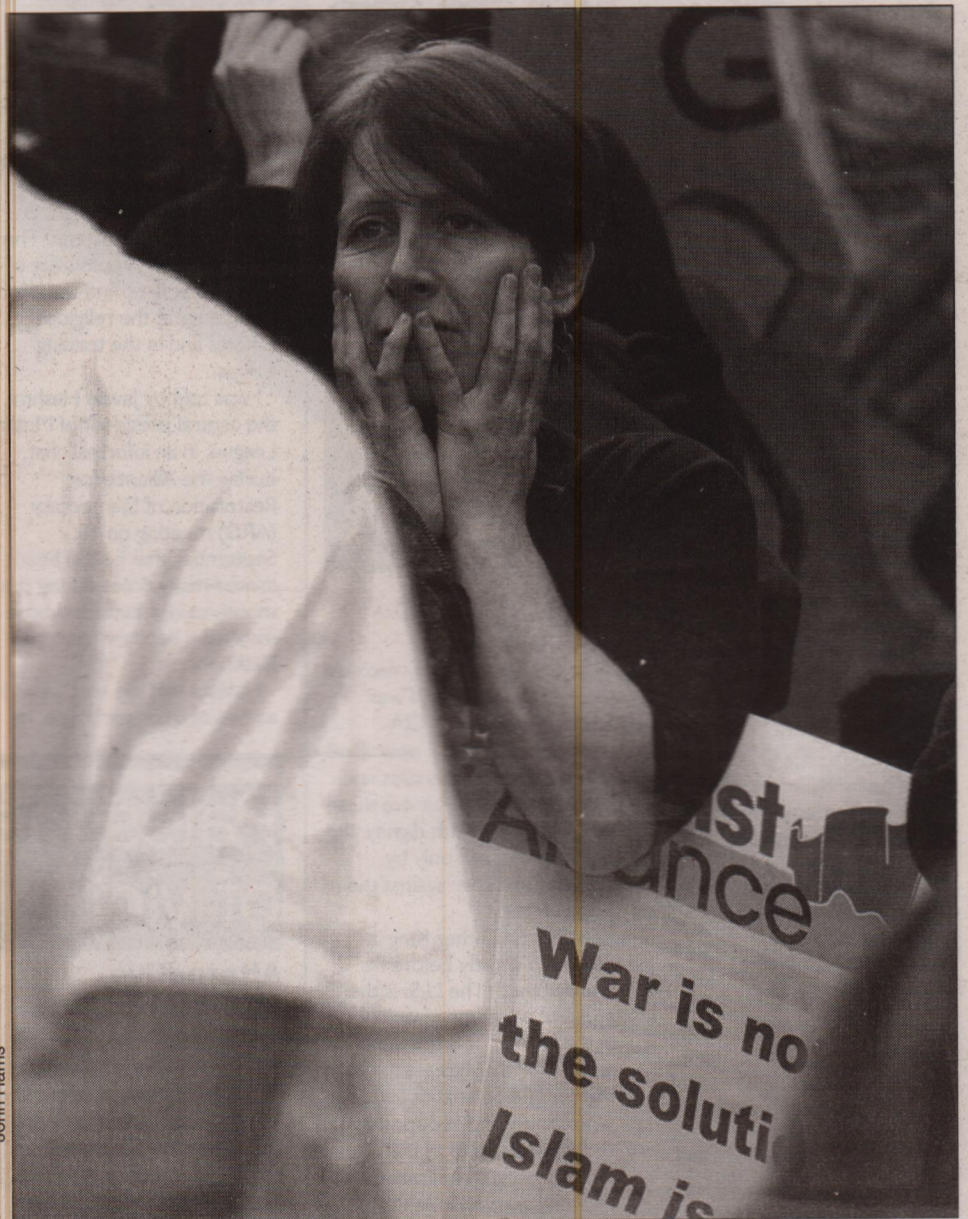


A special 4-page supplement in response to the events since the suicide attacks on US targets on September 11.

As Blair and Straw round up lynch mob for Bush, we say

STOP THE WAR!

CND
Anti-War
Demonstration
London
SATURDAY
OCTOBER 13
Assemble Hyde
Park 12 noon



John Harris

Socialist Alliance back Manchester anti-war protest: War is not the solution: Islam is not the problem

The massive terror attack on the World Trade Centre, which has killed thousands of office and other workers, is indefensible in any terms, and should be condemned outright.

But the war that has been declared by the USA, and the carnage that will be unleashed by the world's only superpower in the quest for military vengeance have nothing to do with "freedom" or "democracy": they are a reactionary attempt to reassert the right of US and world imperialism to exploit and dominate the poor and oppressed throughout the globe.

The political conditions which probably created the September 11 attacks are far from obscure. The perpetrators are not known at this time (despite all claims by the CIA), but the driving force behind them is most likely to be a deep hatred of US imperialism gener-

ated by US foreign policy – past and present.

We share the grief of the relatives of those who have lost their lives at their place of work. The civilian victims, like the great majority of the American people, cannot be held responsible for the barbarous policies of their government.

But for years the US government, and US multi-national companies, have been imposing their will on the world by military force and financial power. They have been destroying local economies, imposing structural adjustment programmes, overthrowing popular governments, and putting the Suhartos, the Pinochets, the Marcoses, and the Mobutus in power – dictators subordinated to the US, who did not hesitate to

slaughter their own people in the cause of US policy.

Now for the first time in recent times the USA is confronted with a huge attack on its own territory. Previously this has been the fate of the Koreans, the Vietnamese, the Cambodians, the Iraqis, the Yugoslavs, the Somalis, the Nicaraguans ... you could name a dozen more.

Under today's globalised economy, the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer, and increased repression is used to keep the poor in their place.

The mass misery which US policy – backed by the major Western powers (particularly Britain) – has imposed on the majority of the world's population has created the conditions for the new feature in

terrorism and resistance: the suicide bomber, and now the suicide pilot.

In occupied Palestine there is no shortage of young men willing to sacrifice their lives in order to strike a blow against the Israeli oppressor. Again, although such acts, particularly against civilians, cannot be supported, it is easy to see how they come about.

Palestinians are dying every day at the hands of an Israeli war machine – a machine supplied, backed, and bankrolled by the USA. The war criminal Sharon is totally backed by George Bush – who is also no longer even interested in the so-called "peace process".

In Iraq a million civilians have perished through US-sponsored

sanctions and the destruction of the infrastructure of the country, including the water supply and treatment plants. Today US and British planes continue to bomb Iraq on a daily basis.

None of these crimes by US imperialism justifies the killing of thousands of US civilians: but they do help to explain the anger which is felt against the USA and its symbols of power.

The fact is that whoever carried out the attacks in the USA, the result of all this will be a new period of reaction. New political conditions more conducive to global capital are being created on the back of the carnage on September 11.

But one thing is sure: the result of acts of war by US imperialism in the present circumstances will be to create the conditions for such acts of terror to be repeated.

Response in USA, Pakistan, Palestine – page 2

Tragedy must not be turned into war!

No US bombing anywhere! Stop US intervention!

Extracts from statement by US Socialist Action

THE GOVERNMENT that spends trillions on war, that has sent more troops to police the world in the interest of corporate profits than any other in human history, that has plundered and ruined the economies of countless underdeveloped countries is again preparing for war.

The inexcusable and horrific terror bombing of New York and Washington, D.C. which took the lives of thousands of innocent people and brought untold grief and suffering to their loved ones, serves as the justification for a Congressional declaration of war against unnamed nations and individuals.

The whole world is threatened with military intervention, bombing and individual assassination if nations refuse to bend to U.S. demands to turn over unnamed individuals, groups and "suspects" who the U.S. proposes, in violation of international law, to obliterate without recourse to democratic process.

A poisoned media and war-mongering bipartisan Congress fuels the flames of racism, leading to mounting attacks on American Arabs and Muslims as well as all those who, in the racist mind, resemble people of the Middle East and Asia.

Today, we are witness to a president proclaiming the U.S. the bastion of freedom in a world that has been subject to inhuman, illegal, genocidal, and terrorist acts at U.S. government hands.

And today, the world's self-appointed cops prepare for new measures against the poor people of the world in the name of fighting terrorism, of which the U.S. rulers are themselves the chief practitioners.

American working people and their allies among all the oppressed and exploited, the youth and all others who cherish justice must now prepare to oppose U.S. militarism and intervention everywhere.

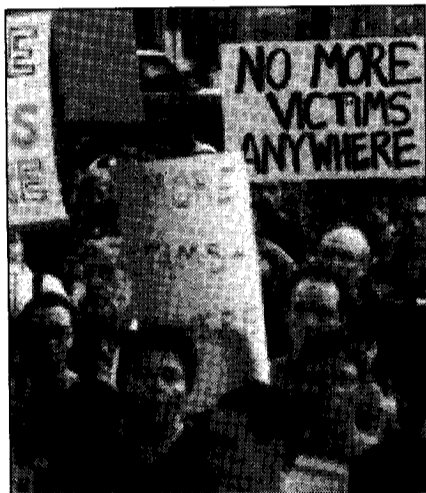
The organisation of broad-based united front mass demonstrations to stop the warmongers must be the top priority of all who struggle for social justice.

We must stand united against the threat of frame-up trials and attacks on our right to due process, the right to assemble, the right to the presumption

of innocence, the right against arbitrary search and seizure, and the right to free speech and association.

Today's witch hunters propose to resort to wiretapping, government informers and agents, plus additional thousands of La Migra border patrols and other police measures in violation of fundamental human and democratic rights.

The bully President Bush has declared war, demanding that the person he describes only as the "suspected" perpetrator, Osama bin Laden, be delivered to the U.S. "dead or alive." Any country that refuses to aid the "crusade" is presumably to be labelled the enemy, and then bombed and



Peace protest in Boston

destroyed at will.

History's tragic irony records that bin Laden himself was among the stable of CIA-trained and financed operatives when it suited imperialist ends.

We can and will survive these troubled times with dignity and rights intact, but only by standing together against the hatemongers.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. observed shortly before his murder that "The U.S. is the greatest purveyor of violence in the world." It is this violence and terror that has produced the handful of fanatics today who blindly and in opposition to the interests of all the world's people replicate on an infinitely smaller scale the deeds of yesterday's brutal and racist colonisers and today's world powers.

The terror, war and barbarism inherent in globalising world capitalism will not be ended until the world's people unite to build a new social order where human solidarity, love, economic, political and social association for the common good, replace the ram-paging horses of the capitalist apocalypse - war, racism, sexism, poverty, hunger and disease.

The answer to terrorism lies in building a world free of oppression and war, in a society that champions human life and solidarity as opposed to capitalist barbarism. Socialism is the name of that society!

Why Pakistan peasants won't condemn New York carnage

Farooq Tariq, General secretary Labour Party Pakistan

I am writing this from Toba Tek Singh, my home town, 300 kilometres away from Lahore, in the central Punjab. It is mainly a peasant dominated area, and main income comes from crops like cotton, wheat, sugarcane and maize.

In the Seventies, it was once a hub of a peasant movement led by the Stalinist Left. On 23rd March 1970, over 500,000 attended a peasant conference in the town.

Now the town is in the grip of religious fundamentalists. In the main centre of the town, we see the paintings of the martyrs (those youth who have been killed during the "holy" war of Kashmir during the last few years). Many religious madrasas (schools) can be found at every street corner.

The street power is in the hand of the religious fundamentalists.

Many working class youth have been recruited during the past years by the Jihadi (holy war) organisation to fight in Afghanistan and Kashmir. The youth finding no possibility of jobs, can at least find the basic necessities at the religious schools and in the training camps.

I was told by Javaid Hashmi, the central president of Muslim League, in an informal chat, during the Alliance for Restoration of Democracy (ARD) meeting on 15 September that he has been invited many times during the month to visit families whose sons have become martyrs in Kashmir.

Hashmi told me that when he arrives at a certain house, he



Bin Laden: he and Taliban seen as challenging US power

has been asked not to condole but to congratulate the family for this great achievement. Sweets are brought to be taken as a gesture of the happiness of the family. And the same goes for the whole village from where these youth normally comes.

It is same sad story of most of the central and Southern Punjab areas from where the bulk of the recruits come for these religious organisations.

In Lahore, the mood among many workers and ordinary citizens was of joy and happiness that the Americans had been taught a lessons at last: but there was also a sympathy for those been killed in the terrorist attack.

The ARD two day meeting on 14, 15 September, condemned the attacks but also gave a warning to the Americans that they should not attack the innocent citizens of Afghanistan.

But at Toba Tek Singh, the mood was of fanaticism. As I arrived after a six hour drive from Lahore to see my ageing father, I was bombarded with questions by him.

A trader all his life, he is now fighting with the banks to give back the loans he once took in

the hope that the agriculture income would improve - but disappointed at the time.

All his initiatives to enhance his ever decreasing income went nowhere. All his life, he remained loyal to the Muslim League, a conservative bourgeois party.

When I condemned the attacks and also told what could happen to the Taliban government in future, and that the act has endangered the lives of the Muslims across the globe, he was untouched, and told me "You could be the only one talking this way in the town." "No one would support you here."

Lesson

He was of the view that the Taliban will teach another historic lessons to the Americans, and that the military regime in Pakistan have little time left in power as they are playing at the hands of the Americans.

He said "I am very happy what has happened in America. The IMF and World Bank have destroyed my life and I am in the grip of the banks as my whole agricultural business has been destroyed by these institutions."

"I cannot afford to pay the price of the pesticides now the state subsidies are gone and my orange garden has been ruined."

I spoke to Afzal, one of my cousins, who told me: "There is no way the Taliban will be defeated by the Americans. How can they defeat the Taliban when they cannot defend their own cities? It is great what has happened."

He also told me that many will join demonstrations if the Americans attack Pakistan or Afghanistan.

"There is a great hatred

among us against the military's capitulation at the hands of Americans," he added. Other people nearby had the same feelings as Afzal.

Six days after the Tuesday attacks on American cities, it seems that generally many are happy and feel pride that at last someone has done the job they should be doing.

It shows an utter hatred of American imperialism among the general masses.

But the mood is turning in favour of the fundamentalists. Once the attack by the Americans starts here, the military regime will face an extraordinary situation of demonstrations and rallies led by the fundamentalists.

One villager told me that the incident of America is like a peasant getting up in a village to fight against the feudal lord with no weapons. No one in the village ever thought of fighting against the feudal lords before. But when this peasant wins the fight, peasants in the whole village will be very happy.

America is a big feudal lord of the world, which has lost the fight at the hands of someone without any resources, and we must celebrate.

Whenever I raised the issue of innocent Americans losing their lives, the normal reaction was, yes we sympathise, but what about those millions of Palestinians, Sudanese, Vietnamese and others who have lost the lives at their hands?

"Who supports Israel?" is another question raised immediately by every one.

It is very clear we, the progressive forces, are among the very few who see we have to condemn terrorism, whether at individual or state level.

Palestine: warning of a "second group of victims" as Israelis crack down

Alternative Information Center

The Alternative Information Center, founded on values of internationalism, humanism and democracy, strongly rejects and condemns the terror attack on the World Trade Center in New York City that happened on September 11, 2001.

While the surviving victims of the attack have not yet been rescued, the bodies of the dead have not yet been buried and there is no indication of who is responsible for the attack, the process of creating a second group of victims has begun.

Just a few days after the World Summit against Racism ended, this terror attack is being used to incriminate Arabs and Muslims as terrorists without any evidence. Former Israeli Prime Ministers Barak and

Nethanyahu paraded in front of the world's media drawing from the events the need to apply extra force against Middle East 'terrorism'.

We recall that Arabs and Muslims were targeted and blamed for the Oklahoma City bombing that had nothing to do with Arabs or Muslims, but with the US far right.

In Israel, the government, the army and the media are using this catastrophe to oppress the rightful struggle of the Palestinian people for freedom and independence. The immediate danger that the events in

the USA will allow further aggressive actions by Ariel Sharon and his administration presents a real threat to the people of Palestine.

Israeli policies of extra-judicial executions, displacement and the besieging of the civil population are not part of a struggle for a safer world but acts state terrorism. As such they endanger the legitimate right of all humanity to live in a safe and secure planet.

The attacks in the US threaten to mark a change in relations between Western hegemony and the oppressed nations and represents a further milestone in the re-arrangement of the world order under the globalization project. This change in relations will fortify the Israeli State policy in the Middle East in the intensification their military campaign and will legitimize greater repressive acts against the Palestinian people.

The AIC believes that justice and security for human-

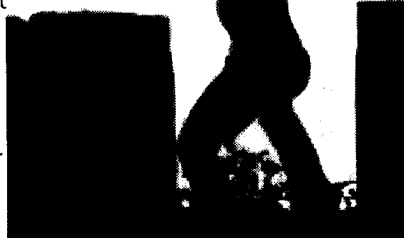
ity cannot be achieved by social, economical and political oppression of the weakest nations and communities.

Freedom and justice for all can only be achieved by securing for all human beings the "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights".

The AIC sees those principles as the only secure base for "the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world", as is affirmed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The greed of colonialism and imperialism, the inhuman exploitation of non-white nations and the war over the control of the planet has led humanity to an age of barbarism and indiscriminate violence.

Today, more than ever, it is urgent that democratic forces in the world join hands in the struggle for social justice, freedom and democracy.



Playing into Bush's hands

THE ATTACK on the World Trade Centre has played right into the hands of US imperialism and the right-wing and reactionary forces all over the world – and they will play it for all it is worth.

At the time of writing the world awaits the first brutal military strike by US and British forces against Afghanistan.

A huge task force of warships, tens of thousands of troops, artillery, fighter aircraft, bombers and missiles have been mobilised in the Middle East and Central Asia – and few really believe that this force will not be used against one of the poorest countries in the world.

Bush has declared that the USA is at war, and that he wants Osama Bin Laden "dead or alive". But many more lives are at stake. Whatever else results from a military strike, however, it will trigger a humanitarian disaster.

Even before the first salvo of bombs and shells explode, millions are already starving in Afghanistan as a result of the withdrawal of humanitarian aid, and tens of thousands are on the move as a result of the threat of war.

Yet plans are being actively considered to go beyond a straight military strike on Afghanistan and to take it over by military conquest and install some kind of regime (as yet undefined) in its place. As the British empire, and later the Soviet Union discovered in the past, if this can be done at all, it can only be done by more wholesale military action.

Blair and Straw travel the world drumming up support for Bush. Governments – and by implication whole populations – are warned that they either back the new imperialist offensive or, by definition, they will be seen as backing the "terrorists".

War fever is being whipped up in the USA, and, in other countries, like Britain, the media is preparing the population for war.

The effects of all this on world politics will be absolutely profound. Unfortunately most of these effects will be to the direct advantage of US imperialism (which has been politically strengthened by the events of September 11) and to the detriment of the working class and its allies world-wide and all those fighting for national and other rights.

This is a direct result of an act of individual terrorism, which must be condemned. This is not only because we are totally opposed to the indiscriminate mass slaughter of civilians, but because such acts of individual terror cannot advance the struggle of the working class and its allies one jot.

The US and its new-found alliance are not just planning and preparing an attack on Afghanistan: US special forces (essentially death squads) are to be sent around the world eliminating suspects in the way Sharon does in

Palestine – a policy condemned up to now by the USA and Britain.

The policy is not new: Clinton has revealed that he (illegally) ordered the assassination of Bin Laden when he was President. The scale of operation being proposed by Bush, however, is of a different



Looking for victims: Bush with Colin Powell

order, and the ban on assassinations by CIA agents is to be lifted. Although the ban was never fully enforced, its lifting will lead to its greatly expanded use.

The lifting of the ban on CIA assassinations is just one aspect of a huge attack on civil liberties being prepared on the basis that such civil liberties hamper the war against the terrorists. A string of measures are being prepared in the USA, while Home Secretary Blunkett is preparing a string of measures here.

More than two weeks after the attack on the WTC the FBI are no nearer establishing, with anything approaching hard evidence, who was responsible. They have not even established the identity of all of the hijackers – since some of those initially named are still alive and well.

Whoever did it, however, it is most likely to be connected US policy in the Middle East and its support for the murderous policies of the Israeli government.

This lack of proof has not stopped the US from declaring that they have conclusive proof, which they now say that they unfortunately cannot make public – because they don't want the Taliban to know!

How proof of Bin Laden's involvement would help the Taliban rather than undermine them is not explained.

Bush, however, intends to invoke the rhetoric of "democracy" and "Freedom", but the old traditions of lynch law. The US will go to war first and produce the evidence (if any) for its actions later.

They are building a coalition which is based largely on cynicism and convenience, and which may not survive the pressures of war.

Russian leader Putin likes it because it legitimises his vicious war in Chechnya (where 200 Chechens a week are still being killed, but which he has claimed is not to crush a national liberation struggle but against "terrorists"). And the Chinese bureaucracy like it because it legitimises their own abuses of human rights.

The Indian government and the Pakistani dictatorship have joined

in because the USA has reciprocated by dropping sanctions imposed against their development of nuclear weaponry, and nodded through new loans to prop up Pakistan's collapsing economy.

Others have joined in for fear of the consequences to them – in terms of US retaliation – if they don't

This attack came at a time when the rise of the anti-globalisation movement was beginning to challenge the forward march of globalisation and the US neo-liberal project.

US imperialism hopes and intends that this will be an opportunity to turn back the clock. In this sense the war drive is the military wing of the process of globalisation and the neo-liberal offensive.

The anti-globalisation movement must ensure that this does not happen. But each of the big recent mobilisations has met increasing levels of repression and this is likely to get much worse. The tactics may have to be modified.

The effects on refugees and asylum seekers and in particular Afghans, Muslims and Arabs is already clear enough. Millions more refugees are being created while refugees in western countries are already facing increasing violence and persecution.

Weasel words from Blair and Bush about "not being at war with Islam" go alongside a war drive which is heavily racist and in which Muslims are presented as synonymous with terrorists.

Islamic fundamentalism is now seen by Bush as the new enemy world-wide, a phenomenon which was largely created by US imperialist policy in the region, by the denial of national rights, abject social conditions and the absence of a socialist alternative.

Remarkably Bush and Blair continue their war drive with little regard to its effects on the stock markets – which have been crashing as the events have unfolded.

The USA was already slipping towards recession, taking many other advanced economies down with it. Mass redundancies had begun and more which were already on the way before September 11.

US consumer confidence has now collapsed, and the crisis of profitability has been exacerbated. The extreme uncertainty over the outcome of military action has caused a crisis which has begun spinning out of control.

The effects on the neo-liberal project and the process of globalisation is now bound up not just with the war drive but economic developments.

There is even speculation that the major economies and the imperialist bankers may be forced to retreat into some form of neo-Keynesianism for a period in order to retrench – as was the case with some of the South East Asian countries during the Asian crisis.

Generally, however, the answer to each turn in the economic situation has been more neo-liberalism not less, and this may well be the case again.

For the left the task is clear



enough. The anti-globalisation movement must not be allowed to falter, rather it must be given new energy and new impetus.

It may be that tactics will have to change – with more emphasis on mass mobilisations which are not so vulnerable to state repression.

The conditions which created the anti-globalisation movement – the increasing gap between rich and poor and the growing ranks of the dispossessed – are still there, and getting worse.

At the same time the left has to build a broad-based anti-war movement against the jingoism which is being whipped up, and which will get worse once the shooting starts.

This needs to be combined with the anti-globalisation movement and built at every level, including in the labour movement and the trade unions.

This is crucial, since acts of individual terror and their effects distort the class struggle.

Already we have seen the TUC conference called off early, and with it whatever fight there was by the trade union leaders against the privatisation proposals of Blair's second term.

Now the Labour Party conference is being cut to a half of its usual length, ensuring that the same battle over privatisation and other highly controversial politics for New Labour's second term is suppressed or curtailed.

The union leaders and some politicians argues that it is "inappropriate" to debate party and political issues while there is a war on.

It is seen as impolite and unpatriotic even to question the wisdom of backing Bush's lynch-mob offensive.

But behind the façade of war-mongering rhetoric and the offensive to reassert imperialist dominance over the world's oppressed, Blair's government is not pausing, but pressing ahead with all of its most reactionary policies – including a new, and even more draconian suppression of civil rights in the name of "defending democracy".

The left must rally the unions and the labour movement to a political fight that must continue and intensify the more Blair wraps himself in the union jack, resorting to patriotism – "the last refuge of the scoundrel" as a pretext for further attacks on working people, at home and abroad.

Grim toll of west's terror

IT IS SAID that the September 11 attacks were the biggest act of terror of all time. But this would only be that case if we only include non-state terror.

■ Many acts and campaigns of state terror surpass it, for example the nuclear annihilation of Japanese cities by the US in 1945, and the carpet-bombing of Dresden in World War 2.

■ Suharto's CIA-backed and orchestrated coup in 1964 slaughtered a million people in Indonesia.

■ Millions of civilians were killed in US bombing in Korea and Vietnam. The USA dropped more bombs on Laos and Cambodia during the Vietnam war than were dropped in the whole of the WW2.

■ US-sponsored "contra" terror squads killed 30,000 civilians in their campaign to oust Nicaragua's Sandinista government.

■ 17,500 civilians were killed in Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon

■ At least a million civilians, half of them children, have died in Iraq as a result of the embargo imposed by the US and Britain.

If Bin Laden is a terrorist he is not the biggest – even if he has done everything the US accuses him of doing.

The irony, in any case, is that Bin Laden was a creation of the CIA during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and the Taliban – accused of harbouring him – was brought to power by the US and its allies.

In fact the proxy war between the USA and the USSR in Afghanistan facilitated the development of well-trained, anti-socialist, Islamic militia network across the Middle East and further afield.

Fighting to stop the war machine

SOCIALIST Outlook

Stop the War Coalition formed

Alan Thornett

Three hundred people came together in London on Tuesday (September 25th) to form an anti-war campaign – which was named the Stop The War Coalition.

It followed a highly successful rally in London last Friday which attracted 3,000 people and ran to three overflow meetings, and the launch of media workers against the war which was held on Monday with 70 people present.

Tariq Ali gave the opening address pointing out that whilst the new war coalition war mobilising for a war with aircraft, and warships, and troops heading for south Asia, there was actually no agreement amongst the coalition as the war aims or even who should be attacked and how.

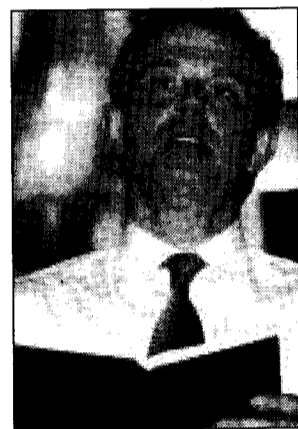
He called for the biggest and broadest anti-war movement possible and advocated the slogan “we are not at war”.

He pointed to the successful protests which have taken place against the war in particular 5,000 people picketed Downing Street last Saturday. There were also sizeable demonstrations in a number of other cities, including Leeds, Manchester and Glasgow.

He argued that this response reflects millions of people in Britain who do not endorse the war aims of Bush and Blair, and whilst totally condemning the terrorist attack and wanting to see something done about it, think that what is being proposed will only make things worse. There is, therefore, he said, the basis for a substantial anti-war movement in



CND and other campaigners challenge Blair's war drive outside Downing Street on September 22



Blair: imperialist hymn sheet

Britain and it is our obligation to build it.

The meeting decided to launch a big campaign against the war in every arena possible. After setting up the campaign the meeting broke up into work groups dealing with various areas of the campaign: trade unions, students, media, anti-racism and asylum seekers, and on Islamophobia.

It was reported that a campaign in the colleges and at the freshers fairs had already produced thousands of signatures against the war.

It emerged at the very good trade union working group that ASLEF has already passed a resolution opposing the war as an emergency resolution for LP conference, and that the RMT is discussing a similar resolution on Thursday.

The meeting discussed a launching a big campaign in the unions against the war including the demand for an emergency TUC conference to discuss it.

This was given a boost by the news that train drivers' union ASLEF has already passed an emergency resolution against the war, to be tabled at the coming Labour Party conference in Brighton.

Plans were made to campaign in the various unions, and also to ensure that the campaign committee and the public platforms of the campaign have adequate trade union representation.

The Stop The War Coalition will be holding weekly open meetings, which will include meetings of the working groups.

England

Big rallies, vigils and meetings against the war drive have been taking place all over the country, and meetings are being organised to form local campaigns. 180 rallied in Portsmouth, while 500 joined a protest in Oxford on September 22.

The Socialist Alliance is giving full support to all anti-war events, and an updated listing on planned events across the country can be found on its web site: www.socialistalliance.net.

Scotland

Immediately after 11th September, the Scottish Socialist Party discussed anti-war initiatives. A paper was produced by the weekend and meetings called for the following week.

On Thursday 20th a meeting of 250 was held in Glasgow and large meetings

were held in Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen.

The Glasgow meeting was called by the SSP and had Tommy Sheridan, Alan McCoombes and Lindsey German on the platform.

On Saturday 22nd over 1,000 attended a CND organised rally in the centre of

Glasgow and similar action took place across Scotland.

The latest issue of *Scottish Socialist Voice* takes the line 'No More Carnage'.

Anti War groups are being set up in many localities in Scotland, although at this point there is no coordinating committee.

USA

STUDENTS have been among the leading elements mobilising against the war threat across the USA, as thousands of reservists have been called up by Bush's war machine.

2,500 rallied against the war in the University of Berkeley, as part of a nationwide effort involving 146 universities in 36 states. In New York University, a meeting of 250 students cheered a socialist speaker who insisted that “We have every right to ask questions of this government”.

As the anti-war movement develops, a former US Attorney General, Ramsey Clark, has put his head firmly above the parapet of patriotic hysteria, and called a protest demonstration outside the White House for September 29, warning that: “A new and widespread war by the USA in the Middle East can only lead to a spiral of violence”.

■ In Brazil, anti-war campaigners are organising a series of mass rallies in Sao Paulo, beginning on September 28.

A new war – on civil rights!

A HUGE attack on civil rights is being prepared under the banner of fighting terrorism. Governments in the US, the EU and in Britain suddenly find that they can bring in measures which would have been unthinkable only three weeks ago.

In the USA and in Britain politicians are arguing that democratic rights have got out of hand and are now playing into the hands of the terrorists.

In Britain Home Secretary Blunkett is arguing that if terrorism is to be combated, civil liberties should be in the hands of politicians and not the courts.

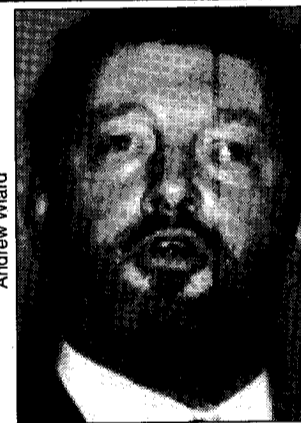
In fact this is already law, because when Parliament incorporated the European convention on human rights into British law it gave politicians the final word.

In the US there are already proposals to lift the ban on the CIA on killing foreigners. Of course the CIA never stopped assassinations when the ban came in, but official sanction would clearly escalate the policy and a lot more people will die.

New powers are being given to the police to arrest and detain on suspicion.

Powers to tap telephones and install surveillance cameras in private homes are being prepared.

In Britain, where the draconian Terrorism Act and



Andrew Wlward

other reactionary legislation passed by New Labour obviously gives sweeping police powers, Blunkett is now considering the introduction identity cards – in what would be a grim echo of South Africa's hated apartheid “pass laws”.

It is something which British governments have dearly wanted for a long time in order to clamp down effectively on asylum seekers, but would have been unable to do under other circumstances.

The Tories considered it several times – and decided against it.

Also mooted is the idea that such identity cards would not just be used to prove identity and address to police on the streets but would be the means of access to a range of services from the NHS to schools libraries and other public services.

New technology would also give the government a range of options in terms of the information it could contain from finger prints to DNA.

How such measures would stop a suicide bomber is not clear: the evidence so far suggests that those who hijacked the planes were legally resident in the USA prior to the attack on New York and Washington, and that they had valid documents.

But there are real and obvious dangers that new powers to stop “suspects” and demand ID cards will be used almost invariably against black people and ethnic minorities – adding yet another strand to the web of state racism.

Thank you comrades – from Charlie

As many readers will know Charlie Van Gelderen has been ill and in hospital. Charlie is now home, although his illness remains, and he has asked us to thank all those comrades (from all over the country) who have sent him cards and best wishes, since he is unable to reply individually. He will not be able to continue with his column in the paper at the present time but he is keen to keep in touch with everyone.

Media Workers Against the War

AT A PACKED meeting in central London more than 70 workers in the media adopted the following statement on the current global situation and their responsibilities in it:

“We are workers in the media opposed to the current war drive and the plans for a US-led military assault on Afghanistan and possibly other countries.

“We are utterly opposed to all acts of terror against civilian populations, whether committed by governments or groups of individuals.

“We believe that in the current crisis it is more important than ever to protect and promote pluralism in debate, the free flow of information, and the public scrutiny of official pronouncements.

“We therefore resolve to join together as Media Workers Against the War in order to:

1. Participate in the broad movement now rapidly emerging against the war
2. Collate and disseminate facts and arguments pertinent to the war, not only from Britain but from around the world
3. Promote anti-war viewpoints through the media and expose and resist attempts at censorship and disinformation
4. Oppose media coverage that in any way licenses or gives succour to racism or attacks on asylum seekers.”

At the meeting, plans were made to set up a Media Workers Against the War website, publish a bulletin, make and distribute anti-war videos, and organise workplace meetings at major media outlets. There will also be a major public rally in central London in the coming weeks.

Media Workers Against the War will seek support from media trade union branches and individuals working in the media. Workers at the BBC, ITN and various national newspapers attended.

THE NEXT regular issue of *Socialist Outlook*, with more in-depth coverage of the aftermath of the September 11 events and other news and analysis, will go to press on October 8. Let us have your news, comment and pictures for publications by October 4, by email to outlook@gn.apc.org, or by fax to 020 8880 1846, or by post to PO Box 1109, London N4 2UU.
■ Contact *Socialist Outlook* on the web at www.labournet.org.uk/so, and the International Socialist Group web site is www.3bh.org.uk/ISG