

Socialist Alliance statement on recent events in USA

The horror and the hypocrisy

The Socialist Alliance shares the horror felt by people across the planet at the devastation and suffering in New York and Washington. We condemn these acts of indiscriminate violence against masses of human beings, for which there can be no justification, and which have set back the cause of poor and oppressed people everywhere.

Working class people in the United States have borne the brunt of this atrocity, and we stand in solidarity with them and in particular with the public sector workers and trades unionists who have performed the most dangerous and difficult tasks in rescue and recovery, in the course of which hundreds gave their lives.

But condemnation of the horror inflicted upon people in the United States is not enough. If we want to ensure nobody anywhere has to suffer such tragedies again, it is also necessary to analyse the deeper roots of the massive violence that wrecks lives and wracks societies across our world - and to build a global movement that can truly eradicate it.

With many millions in every continent, we share the fear that the United States government and its allies, notably the British government, will compound this tragedy by taking yet more innocent lives and subjecting yet more innocent people to fear and social disruption, possibly plunging us all into a global cycle of extreme violence and mindless retribution. State terrorism of any kind is not an acceptable response to these events; in cooperation with others we will do our utmost to stop it.

We condemn the hypocrisy and arrogance of the US political leadership and its allies in Britain. These people are themselves complicit in appalling acts of terrorism and violence against civilian populations, and in general of imposing policies of inhuman brutality across much of the third world. Among the human costs of those policies have been the deaths of more than half a million children in Iraq, hundreds of thousands in East Timor, and many others in the Balkans, Palestine, the Congo, central America, and of course Afghanistan itself, where the USA armed, trained and funded both Osama Bin Laden and the Taliban. The most fitting memorial to those who died or suffered in New

York and Washington would be the building of a mass movement to reverse those policies and replace them by policies that promote peace, democracy, co-operation and sustainable and egalitarian economic development.

Only three years ago, a previous US president, with the vociferous support of Tony Blair, exacted revenge for a terrorist attack by bombing a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan, with terrible loss of life and destructive consequences for the people of that country. There proved to be no connection between the factory and the alleged perpetrators of the terrorist attack. The US bombing, and Britain's shameful support for it, became another sharply felt grievance in the third world, and another spur for the types of people who may have committed the outrages in the USA.

We also condemn those politicians and forces in the media who have seized on these terrifying events to promote their own self-seeking agendas of increased military and intelligence spending, curbs on civil liberties, and attacks on asylum seekers, immigrants or members of religious or ethnic minorities.

We call on all those who have shared our horror at the scenes in the USA to join us in acting now to prevent the proliferation of violence across the world. We are ready to play our part in mobilising the broadest possible opposition to any attempt by US politicians and their global allies to use this tragedy as a pretext for military aggression.

We note that once again the debate in Parliament has failed to reflect the spectrum of opinion in the country. Only a tiny handful of MPs expressed the concerns shared by millions in this country about the justice and impact of the military action contemplated by the US government, or the widely-felt objection to Tony Blair giving George W Bush a blank cheque. New Labour and the Tories appear united in their support for US foreign policy, however dangerous it may prove to the people of the planet. Once again, recent events have demonstrated that working people in Britain need an independent voice that will speak out against the elite interests that now dominate the main parties. To eradicate violence, it is necessary to eradicate social and economic injustice. Global capitalism is creating a world of ever more pronounced extremes of wealth and poverty, power and powerlessness. As long as this process continues, we will live in a violent and unstable world.

At this difficult time, it is vital that we stand together against the war-makers, the arms-dealers, the giant corporations, the racists, and all the highly-placed hypocrites who would exploit fear, grief and uncertainty for their own ends. The Socialist Alliance is determined to play the fullest part in this struggle for humanity and life against money, power and death.