

Editorial from Scottish Socialist Voice
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Thousands, perhaps even tens of thousands of corpses today lie under the rubble of what was once the most spectacular building in the world.

This was an act of indiscriminate mass terrorism. The World Trade Centre may symbolise the power and wealth of American capitalism. But the 50,000-strong workforce, in the building consisted overwhelmingly of white-collar workers, predominantly women, many of them drawn from New York's kaleidoscope of ethnic communities.

Among those killed are vast numbers of firefighters, police officers, ambulance and first aid staff who were heroically battling to rescue the survivors when the towers collapsed. The atrocity has been condemned not just by political allies of the USA, but by states and political movements which the American government regards as mortal enemies, including Cuba, Libya, the PLO and the Iranian Fedayeen.

It is unlikely that the Manhattan massacre will be the end of the slaughter. US generals and politicians are now threatening retaliation, not just against the perpetrators, but 'against those who harbour them'.

Retribution is likely to rain down on the heads of innocent people whose only crime is to have been born in the wrong country. Already there is talk of unleashing nuclear weapons against Afghanistan and other 'rogue states'.

Such retaliatory action would not end the threat of suicide bombings; instead it would lead to an intensifying spiral of violence and counter-violence across the globe in which the casualties will not, in the main, be the politicians and the generals - but the working class people of the West and above all, the poverty-stricken people of the East.

However unjustifiable the actions of suicide bombers, whether in New York or Jerusalem, the sad truth is that the American people have suffered a terrible backlash at the hands of desperate people who believe they are fighting back against decades of cold cruelty.

In particular, the Islamic population of the Middle East has suffered decades of vicious humiliation, forced destitution and brutal subjugation at the hands of the United States. George W Bush's father ordered the bombing of Baghdad in 1991 in which 1 00,000 civilians and conscripts were murdered in punishment for the cardinal sin of living under a dictator who had disobeyed America.

Children who were not even born when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait are today dying in agony in ramshackle hospitals in Baghdad as a result of the inhuman sanctions enforced by the American government.

Meanwhile, millions of Palestinians whose parents and grandparents were forcibly driven from their homes now live in the human battery farms of the Gaza Strip and the

West Bank and suffer daily repression and humiliation at the hands of the Israeli state, bristling with weapons, supplied by the United States.

The mass murder by Israel in 1982 of 17,500 Palestinians in the Lebanon will never be forgotten. These Palestinians - and hundreds of thousands of others - were slaughtered by weapons built by and supplied by America.

In the supposedly oil-rich Middle East millions have less to eat than the pampered pets of middle class and upper class America. In this tortured region, hatred of the richest and most powerful country in the world is engraved on the hearts of little children.

While these conditions persist, there will always be a procession of terrorists and suicide bombers prepared to carry on the struggle.

The choices facing humanity in the 21st century are starker than ever before. Global capitalism will plunge the world into barbarism - and there will be no escape, even for the inhabitants of the richest city of the richest and most powerful country on the planet.

Or we can step up the fight for global socialism - and aim to build a system in which the resources of the world are shared by the peoples and nations of the world.