

THOUSANDS OF VICTIMS IN THE USA:

IMPERIALISM IS RESPONSIBLE

Now we must stop Bush's war against the peoples

Last September 11th a series of attacks against the symbols of American capitalism shocked the world. Three kidnapped aeroplanes were launched against the towers of the World Trade Centre. Both towers collapsed. The Pentagon was partly destroyed. Panic was unleashed in the most powerful country on this planet. Air traffic was suspended all over the country. The White house and other public buildings were evacuated. President Bush remained in hiding during the whole day, away from the events. The toll of the dead and wounded soared up to several thousand.

The people of the world accompanied these facts with different reactions.

In the metropolitan countries, the vast majority, amazed at the events, and following their governments and the mass media, expressed their solidarity with the USA.

In the countries of the so-called "Third World" the reaction was different. A good part of the Palestine population, having suffered everyday massacres by Israeli armed forces, USA's gendarme in the Middle East, took to the streets to celebrate the attacks. In other countries, thousands of people who with all justice identify American imperialism as the main culprit of all the great evils that befall on them watched with certain sympathy the crumbling down of the imperialist symbols. They saw the vulnerability of imperialism. This reaction which took many analysts by surprise, discloses the fact that in these last years there has been an awakening of a deeply anti-imperialist awareness among the toiling masses of colonial and semi-colonial countries.

In the USA reality was quite different. The afflicted toiling masses followed the news while thousands searched –and still keep on searching – in the hospitals and among the rubble to see if they can find their missing friends and relatives, most of them workers.

The culprits are at home

The American population expects the FBI to find the culprits. It is a futile task. Perhaps the FBI may identify one or more terrorist groups, but they will never expose the real culprit responsible for the death of so many American workers: the American imperialism itself. This terrorist exploit is impossible to understand out of the context of the policy of the leading power of the planet.

The government of the USA, allied to a reduced number of countries, is the main source of unemployment, squalor and destruction. American capitalism, in a desperate attempt at keeping their profit rates high, is trying to transform most of the countries into colonies. This generates resistance, struggles, revolutions, and confronted with this the response has mainly been violence and more violence.. Entire countries and populations have been wiped out, sometimes through direct intervention (Viet-Nam, Iraq, Yugoslavia) or through financing their agents. Sometimes these agents are states (Israel) and sometimes they are counterrevolutionary guerrilla (Afghanistan, Nicaragua...) The activity of the different American Administrations has caused so much squalor and destruction and – consequently – so much hatred – and this is what has made this type of vents possible.

But it may be that the responsibility for this new attack that sectors of American administration and/or of sectors of American bourgeoisie hold is not only indirect. The ease with which the terrorists violated all security services of the leading power of the

world leads to plenty of doubts and uncertainty. On the other hand, his would not be anything unheard of in the USA.

In 1995 a public building in the city of Oklahoma was blown into the air. It was the biggest terrorist attack in the history of the USA: 169 people – among them many children – died in the explosion. From the start, FBI and the government accused Bin Laden for the attack. Later on the author was identified. He was Timothy Mc Veigh, a former military man, decorated for his activity in the Gulf War, member of an ultra right wing organisation. Several people, among them a high ranking officer of the air force, reported evidence inducing the belief that segments of security services may have been participating in the attack. The “powerful FBI”, however, did not follow a line of investigation into the matter. Veigh was executed and in this way he took the names of the others into his grave with him. This fact was exposed a week before the recent raids by the prestigious American historian, Gore Vidal.

It is impossible to know whether sectors of American bourgeoisie participated in the recent attacks. What does exist is a number of powerful political and economic interest that might justify such a participation. An example of this is the project of the Bush administration (and of the powerful bourgeoisie linked to the military industry) to make great investments in the area of defence. This project, meaning billions of dollars, was being challenged by those who argued that such an investment was no longer justified once the “cold war” was over. Now, after the recent terrorist attacks, Bush’s armamentist project will hardly be challenged.

For the time being we cannot know if the lives of the thousands of workers who died in the WTC was sacrificed for the sake of the profit of American capitalism. What we do know is that capitalism has proved capable of sacrificing more human lives for fewer dollars than that.

The empire counterattacks

No matter who the responsible for these attacks may have been, we must understand that we are witnessing events of historical nature, with deep repercussions in all the spheres. Now, a few days after the attacks we are living moments in which the American imperialism, in agreement with the leading European powers, is getting ready to launch a counteroffensive. This is what they call “war to terrorism”. American war sub secretary, Paul Wpñfowitz, was quite explicit about the meaning of this war. “It is not just to get hold of those who did it and make them pay for what they did, but also to eliminate the shrines, the support, put an end to all the states that sponsor terrorism.”

It would be naïve, however, to believe that the counteroffensive that the imperialist governments want to launch would only have the terrorists and the governments who sponsor them as reference. Terrorism challenges imperialist interests. From this point of view, it is a real problem that these governments have, but it is also an excuse. Terrorism, which incidentally exists in all the continents, will be used to develop a global counteroffensive at all levels: ideological, political, economic and military. The real consignee of this war “against terrorism” are not the terrorists who in comparative terms are very few, but those countries who are independent from imperialism or who are trying to maintain some degree of independence. That is why Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and any other who might hint at a similar course, runs the risk of being massacred by the bombs of the imperial armies.

But the counteroffensive will not be limited to these countries either and the American government has been clear about that. It is all about defending American interests “wherever they may be menaced”. That is why an important official of the defence department declared for the CNN that American government was very concerned about terrorism in Latin America.

Terrorism is a menace for the imperial interests, but an even greater menace is the struggle of the toiling masses. It is the Intifada, it is the insurrections such as the one of Ecuador, it is the upsurge of struggles in Latin America; it is the demonstration in the USA itself, like the one in Seattle or Washington; it is the struggles in Europe, such as the ones that have been taking place in France or the recent demonstration in Genoa, in Italy, when about 200 000 people protested against the meeting of the G-8. It was this event that made the President of France, Chirac, say that the leaders of the imperialist powers have been shocked.

In short, the real addresses of this imperialist counteroffensive against "terrorism" will be the workers, the toiling masses, the peasants and the youth of the underdeveloped countries but also in the imperialist ones. Imperialism will try to bomb everything even if the manner may vary.

Ideologists of imperialism have already begun a brutal ideological offensive summoning us all to align behind them in defence of "freedom" and this campaign is beginning to penetrate into the workers movement. An example of this is the philosopher Habermas who inspires a good part of the left-wing organisations and who now calls on us to choose between "barbarism and western civilisation". According to this "left-wing" philosopher imperialism stands for "civilisation".

American imperialism and its European allies, by means of IMF and other organisms, will try and reinforce the economic offensive against the dependent countries. For example, in Latin America the USA will try to rush through the AFTA to see if they can achieve another leap in the re-colonisation of the entire continent..

But the workers and the youth of the imperialist countries will also have to pay a price to the counteroffensive. For example, USA, affected not only by the terrorist attacks but also by economic recession, will try and use terrorism to overcome the recession by developing the war industry, and this weaponry race will have to be paid for by the American taxpayer. The government has already declared that part of the war effort will come out of the funds reserved for education. Besides, the price to be paid by the American toiling masses, particularly the young ones, will be even more painful. The American government knows that it will hardly be able to get rid of the governments of Afghanistan or Iraq by merely bombing from a height of 5000 metres. That is why they are studying the possibility of sending troops and so, once more, just like in the Viet-Nam war, American youth will become the cannon fodder in defence of imperialist interests. But it is not only that. The militarist policy of the USA will probably provoke reactions and new raids may take place in the USA and if this takes place, once more the casualties will almost certainly be workers.

A menace over Afghanistan

To initiate this global counteroffensive, American imperialism needs a response proportional to the blow received and that is why in these next weeks we shall probably witness a vicious offensive against a country or some countries that – in the opinion of the American government – are protecting terrorists. Afghanistan seems to be the first target. To begin with, Bush administration has summoned 35 000 reservists and American senators have released 40 000 million dollars for reconstruction tasks and for the military offensive and NATO has declared support.

To justify the military attack on Afghanistan, the imperialists are making a systematic campaign to highlight the backwardness of the country, the oppression of women, the obscurantist and repressive nature of Taliban, the bloodthirsty nature of the terrorist Bin Laden, etc.

We, revolutionary socialists, do not defend backwardness, we repudiate the oppression of women whether it is in Afghanistan or in any other part of the world – and we shall not give any kind of political support to either Taliban or the multimillionaire Bin Laden.

Neither the Taliban nor Bin Laden deserve the least bit of confidence on behalf of socialist workers' revolutionary organisations. And we do not say so simply because we do not have any programmatic agreement with them, or with him, but also because both Taliban and Bin Laden himself have been until quite recently paid and trained by the CIA. And this fact unveils the cynicism of Bush and his gang who accuse Taliban of being repressive and oppressive and Bin Laden of being bloodthirsty. But were they any different when they were on the USA payroll to dispute the Russian hegemony over Afghanistan?

Imperialism does not wish to destroy Taliban because it oppresses women or because it destroys historical monuments; nor does it wish to destroy Bin Laden because he is cruel. If that were so, it would be impossible to understand why they financed him for so many years. Imperialism wishes to destroy Taliban for the only positive element it has: because it refuses to comply with the orders from USA.

Individual terror

Many anti-imperialist fighters regard this type of terrorist action as an alternative to defeat imperialism. We consider this to be a serious mistake and not only because this action claimed the lives of several thousand workers, but also because actions of this sort far from weakening imperialism, strengthen it

The toiling masses all over the world have started moving and acting showing the way to defeat imperialism. This action has made some believe that there is another path. That it is enough for one group to perform one bold action and the enemy will be defeated. This is doubly wrong. Firstly because history has proved that imperialism can only be defeated by a revolution and that a revolution can only be accomplished by the toiling masses and secondly, because if the toiling masses were to be convinced that imperialism can be defeated by means of individual terrorism, they would lose sense of their own efforts and activity.

But in the case of the recent attack, the result of such an action is much more negative for the masses than other similar attacks that took place in these last years.

After their defeat in Viet Nam, imperialism has found it difficult to convince their population of the need to carry out military interventions and hasn't had the right conditions for sending soldiers to land invasions. This is what we call the "Viet-Nam syndrome". Today, however, the terrorist attacks with a toll of thousands of dead workers have created a new situation. Most of the population cry for revenge and are rallying around the American government. What is more: a recent survey shows that 90% of the population is for war and even 69% are for war even at the cost of the lives of many American soldiers.

If today imperialism has the possibility of launching a counteroffensive against the nation of the world, it is due to the fact that they have managed to recruit the majority of the toiling masses for this policy. This is the ill-fated practical result of this terrorist action.

American workers and youth at crossroads

As a result of the terrorist action, the workers of the USA, their students and unemployed, in other words, all the exploited and oppressed of that country feel that they have been attacked and are threatened. This cannot be avoided. When all is said and done, what for some may have been the downfall of a symbol of imperialism, for many American workers became tons of concrete grinding their families, their fellow workers or friends to death. The American government, with the support of the media, is very craftily taking advantage of this feeling in order to encourage the craving for revenge and for the defence of the threatened "fatherland".

This patriotic campaign by the American government shows the imperialist counteroffensive. In this case it is a counteroffensive against the American toiling masses, who in the past forced the USA to withdraw from Viet-Nam and in the present, as we can see in Seattle, is once more beginning to confront the empire.

In this way, American workers and youth are now at the crossroads, because if – in order to save their lives threatened by terrorism they rally round their government, they will be doing nothing different than rallying round the leading terrorist, that is to say the USA itself, and many more lives, all over the world, will be threatened. Do not let us forget Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Do not let us forget Viet-Nam under the American napalm raids. On the other hand the life of the workers, especially the young ones, will not be much more secure for they will be the cannon fodder in any invasion and because they will be the first victims of the new raids that the activity of the government will almost certainly provoke in the USA. Confronted with the warmongering campaign of imperialism, American toiling masses have no choice but to re-take the tradition of the mass demonstrations against the Viet-Nam war, something that has been partially taken up again in the Seattle and Washington demonstrations. We know that it is a hard task due to the confusion created by the attack, but there is no choice and in the pursuit of this aim it is the unity with the workers of colonial and semi-colonial countries that is posed in order to halt the IMF and the AFTA and the march towards another world, with no empires, no exploitation, no oppression: a socialist world.

The last word is with the toiling masses: imperialist attack is to be halted

Imperialism is preparing a vicious counteroffensive which is being announced as anti-terrorist but is really against the peoples and against the toiling masses.

It would be a serious mistake not to notice this counteroffensive, but it would be equally serious to believe that its counterrevolutionary targets have become reality. As far as this is concerned, the last word belongs to the toiling masses.

Imperialism feels strong enough to launch this counteroffensive because the terrorist attacks have given them an excuse to put forward to their population and to the world, an excuse that they did not have before. We must take note of the fact, however, that this counteroffensive is being launched within a framework that is not all that favourable for imperialism. This counteroffensive is taking place against the background of an economic crisis further aggravated by the terrorist attacks. This counteroffensive will have to confront the Palestinian Intifada, the upsurge of struggles in Latin America and in several other parts of the planet and, what is even more important, this counteroffensive will have to confront a growing anti-imperialist feeling that the raids and all the activity of the media have been able to revert, for it is a feeling deeply rooted in the hunger, in the unemployment, in the poverty, in the squalor that imperialism causes and can no longer mask.

This imperialist counteroffensive can and should be halted by the toiling masses, but in order for this to happen it is necessary for the most aware sectors, the revolutionary, anti-imperialist, democratic workers and young people's organisations must find their place in the correct trench. The imperialist proposal to form a front against the terror under the leadership of Bush must be opposed by the most ample unity in action of the workers and the youth of all the countries of the world to confront imperialism and its new plans, beginning by halting this first escalation of this counteroffensive: the military invasion of Afghanistan. If this invasion crystallises in that or any other country, the toiling masses will be faced with a challenge: to transform that country into a new Viet-Nam for the government of the USA.