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# Capitalist terror and madness

George bin Laden & Osama son of Bush incorporated.

Harald Beyer-Arnesen

2001

Towers may blow up and crumble, while fortifying the very social structures they stood as a symbol for. The words *You can't blow up a social relation*, ring truer than ever.

There are good reasons to begin talking about terror as such and within a global context. To a large extent terror can also be viewed apart from whatever motives that may hide behind particular expressions of it, or whether it is carried out of states or not. If the end result is the same, in both a shorter and longer term perspective, such distinctions become less important. Which does not mean we should overlook the question of ideological legitimization. It is no coincidence that terror has formed such a central part within fascist movements. Nor that words such as class are absent in Osama bin Laden's as well as George Bush's legitimization of terror.

Terror has a long history in the service of counter-revolution, and will always work towards undermining the very foundations of a new, free, postcapitalist, society, or even one where forces of death, oppression and exploitation are significantly weakened. The Red Terror orchestrated by the Bolsheviks, directed against, they claimed, the old ruling classes, had essentially two effects, apart

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from that of immediate, indiscriminate death. It brought into existence the repressive forces of the new state which were again redirected against the workers and peasants, and served as the most "vital" recruiting ground for the White Army (or armies). For the rest of the Civil War period, the terror within these two armies, combined with and constituted a precondition for the terror directed against workers, and even more so against the peasants masses. This produced an even greater army of deserters, but also a situation where two camps, becoming increasingly indistinguishable from each other, in effect recruited solidiers for the other side. The Red Army victory was finalized through a massive war against the peasantry and the working class, and the greatest famine that the Russian Empire, had seen. Five million starved to death. Further down this historical blind alley, followed the rule of Stalin.

Terror can be reduced to the following: To rule through fear. The target is not the persons directly hit but those who fear they might be the next. Thus the more indiscriminate the better. Terror produces or reinforces counter-terror, and imposes internal terror in both camps. In the late Yugoslavia, this Rule was played out as civil war. On another level, in Northern Ireland, the sectarian killings are not only in themselves a manifestation of terror but also its true-born children. While having roots and precedents further back in Irish history, organisational terror of more recent date have been effective in reproducing this madness. Any terror group, even those who start out with social revolutionary pretensions, will tend to reproduce the state from within, as well as reinforcing the one whose power they set out to "ex-terminate;" a favorite expression of Lenin, who tended to confuse social relations with biology. However, to have assisinated Hitler during World War II or Stalin in his might, would not have consitituted terror if carried out from the conviction that their removal alone could lessen sufferings and save many more lives. These are two of the rare historical cases where this very likely also would have been the result.

In what follows it is important that readers clearly distinguish between Islamism as a political project (with numerous historical precedents in the history of European Christianity, the time when such a term still had a real meaning as a Rule and not only exception) and muslims as fellow workers and friends.

The abstract words of **justice and honor** of Islamists such as Osama bin Laden and feyadeen of Imperial Order, as George Bush, turns to corpses within and without the United States. Like the national socialism of the Ba'th, Islamism shares with the governments of the United States of America and Israel, in being far more effective in taking the lifes of "muslims" – or human beings of flesh and blood and lifegiving kaffir (heathen) dreams, as I would say – than other such human creatures, as Israeli "jews," or U.S. "christians." That is not likely to change. Nor is this a coincidence.

In 1981, Lafif Lakhdar wrote in *Khamsin: Journal of revolutionary socialists of the Middle East*:

*"In a Moment of frankeness, Hasan al-Banna' admitted in 1947 to the members of his [Muslim] Brotherhood [in Egypt] that the first obstacle they would meet on the path to the re-Islamisation of secular Muslim society, in his opinion, would be the hostility of the people. 'I must tell you,' he said, 'that your preaching is still a closed book to the majority. The day when they discover it and realise what it aims for, they will resist violently and oppose you tentaciously.'"*

This the Taliban knows, and this is also the reason for their state-building terror. What they do not recognise is that they in a longer perspective are paving the road for the McDonaldisation and secularisation of Afghanistan. Thus Lafif Lakhdar could write 20 years ago about a country bordering Afghanistan: "Contrary to what Islamic propaganda claims, and many western leftist believe, today's Iran does not represent the reinvogation of Islam but its swan song, except that it lacks any beauty"

Our social revolutionary friend made another significant observation:

*“The cult of death may well fascinate a large number of middle class youths, who are the victims of emotional blocks, and are frightened of freedom and and libertarian ways. It is however no solution in the face of the real problems which shake the very foundation of the Iranian society. A person such as Khomeini, who suffers from historical scleroris, and who in his book “Islamic Government” deals with such serious problems as the buggery of a poor donkey by poor muslims, and who is incapable of creating an Iranian bourgeoisie, can only return to to the American fold or fall under Soviet influence. “We are less independent today,” admits Badi Sadr, “than we were under the Shah. Our budget depends on the credit of foreign banks. Our dependence on arms and foreign military experts is quite simple tragic.” Has Bani Sadr, the spiritual son of the Imam, finally grasped that in a world unified by the violence of the laws of the market Iran cannot be independent, whether the Imam is present or absent, likes it or not? .... The middle classes, who first idolised Khomeini in the belief that they had found in him an universal miracle cure, now turn away from him to await the coup d’État. The sub-proletariat who served him as cannon fodder, now suffer more than ever with the repression of the Khalkhali. The proletariat are engaged in a permanent struggle in their workplaces to counter the intervention of the Islamic committees, and only stop specific strikes to return their permanent go-slow.”*

Through one of those ironic twist of history, Osama Bin Laden and Taliban are preparing the incorporation of Afghanistan into the “American fold.” If a further tens of thousands of Afghanis do

(which magnitude is still quite unclear), and the seeking of legitimation for this through the United Nations, is not just a facade. We are moving towards a global order, also politically, in a whole new sense. Just as the the increased speed and magnitude of communication and transportation on a global level is increasingly also furthering a blurring between terror, policing and war. But we should also be aware of the new positive possibilities for a struggle of global resistance founded on solidarity this opens for us, with a potential to take us beyond capitalism.

Capitalism is a complex, globally interlinked social system that only can be surpassed through a collective creative effort on the basis of human communication and practical, non-hierarchical and globalised solidarity of the working classes. There never was and never will be any other road. Now less than ever.

A last word about terror. In a play of words: Out of the ruins of anarchy, anarchy cannot arise, only the rule of the Market and the State in their most brutalised, authoritarian manifestations. In its proper sense, anarchy of course does not signify disorder and the struggle of each against all, however common such a belief may be, but the overcoming of the Rule of the Siamese Twins of Market and State through the human creation of a global classless society, where people in cooperation rule over their own lives and destinies, and the freedom of all becomes the condition of the freedom of each, as the freedom of each is the condition for the freedom of all.

not die in the process, it is through no merit of theirs. Nor should we thank them if September 11 does not produce an inflation of death, carried further to other countries and continents as massacres, civil wars, pogroms and famine, nationalist and religious hysteria, foreign military intervention and terror. Whether or not the verdict of history will show al-Qaeda was directly responsible for the World Trade Center graveyard is not the question here, but that this expression of Islamism have been disseminating a Culture of Death, Terror, Oppression, Self-oppression and Stupidity, which nutures such acts. All with the complicity of global financial institutions, the governments of "the West," as well as of of Israel, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, the military regime of Algeria, Iraq, and others. In implicating all these other actors, I am not promoting some weird conspiracy theory, but an understanding of how social forces de facto tend to reinforce each other, knowingly or unknowingly. The extremely central role Saudi Arabian petroleum money has played, and very likely will continue to do, is almost comical but also very telling.

The World Trade Center massacre must be comprehended within an agenda of nuturing xenophobic hysteria. As a means for ends that geographically lie elsewhere. That the airborne suicidal guiders of the will of God were human beings with crushed dreams, and victims of capitalist alienation as much as everyone else whose lives exploded, like the numerous children who suffer a far less spectacular death in Iraq under the rule of Washington, D.C. and Baghdad, does not change this.

Within such an agenda, US might and wealth and the settler colonialism of Israel, become the best of allies, but can only function as such by being portrayed as the incarnation of "Satan" within an endless rhetorical monologue, where the distinction between rulers and ruled, and every class perspective, is wholly blurred. Just as the US propaganda apparatus never can make any real critique of Islamism, the Islamist leaders, as the Panarabic before them, cannot put forth any real critique of the global social order that the United

States is a manifestation of. This would have undermined their own power basis and ends. Instead their “anti-imperialism” and Jihads serve as a means to enslave their “own” working classes: to reproduce “Satan,” as the rule of fascist terror within an Islamic or nationalist ideological framework, even more oppressive in many aspects than “Satan himself.” Only to soon be fully reintegrated into the capitalist world order they always were a particular expression of. And in the meantime, all social struggles pointing beyond the present order, all efforts of bringing into life a confederation of globalised workers-to-workers solidarity, is undermined.

Terror works in seemingly mysterious ways. If looked at not from the perspective of New York, but from people coming from regions where Islamist terror forms part of, or is on the verge of becoming, part of daily fear, the message of September 11 spoke loud and clear. The turning of the World Trade Center into a graveyard was from this point of view a de facto declaration of war by rulers and would-be-rulers against the masses in the Middle East and Central Asia, North Africa and beyond. Not a struggle against oppression and exploitation: but a call for total submission through terror, and an expression of inter-capitalist competition. A terror that did not start and will not end in New York, which never was its real target. Which is yet another reason to oppose NATO's war-efforts.

Simultaneously this act of terror is exploited as a means to impose “security” on the working class of “the North,” and throughout the globe. Around and within Fortress Europe, and all the other Fortresses of the world, the walls are now being built taller, and a whole new level of control is being imposed. Refugees, legal and illegal immigrants – and those who from their appearance can be suspected to belong among “Them” – will be hit worst. Increasingly they will become victims of a more subtle terror, a phenomenon which started long ago but which now has gained force. Without ever reaching the headlines, a greater number of human beings seeking a better future for themselves and their children, trying to reach the shores of Spain, Italy, Australia and elsewhere, will

drown, be shot (as happens on the US-Mexican border), or die for other reasons. Increased “security” will extend worldwide, and lead to the full imposition of a global capitalist world (dis)order.

Nothing of this is predetermined, but such an agenda has gained force after September 11, 2001. It has become even more critical to wage also an ideological struggle against forces of terror, state-sponsored or not, on a local and global level. We are all part of the one same bloody civilisation, of alienation and silent and spectacular death and boredom, but also of compassion, love and broken hearts, tears and laughter, hopes and dreams, and a capacity for globalised solidarity.

The capitalist world order is an order that rules by being everywhere, and increasingly so, and not only in a restricted economical sense. If all its force was concentrated in the Pentagon it would have been easy to overcome. Instead it rules as much through small and large Ayatollahs, small and large Saddam Huseyns and Assads, Milosovics and Tudjmans, Sharons and Arafats and, as well as through the “humanitarian” rulers of the Scandinavian countries. The latter is true as well. But terror is still among the phenomenons that most effectively reproduces the monster, state-sponsored or not. Afghanistan has been one of this centres of capitalist world disorder in the last decades. There another manifestation of **modern** alienation was born, created out of many worlds, of old and new ones, linked to the global market in numerous ways. That the Taliban soldiers, together with Pakistani border guards, in these very days are being bribed to turn their heads the other way, so to let refugees pass a closed border, and that this is all organised as an enterprise, selling the fear of famine and death for what amounts to several months salary, is just another example on how the force of commodity production and the spirit of George Bush is very much alive in the realm of Taliban.

The world is increasingly moving towards a triadic American-European-Asian Empire. The enforced alliance-building we are now seeing around the Pentagon's campaign of Infinite Terror