

# REVOLUTION

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# NO



# WAR



## HANDS OFF AFGHANISTAN!

# This is a war for global capital

by Sean, Yuen & Simon

**The** horrific attacks on the World Trade Centre, which lead to the deaths of over 6000 people in New York on 11 September, has shocked millions around the world. Revolution condemns the attack and the massacre of civilians. If the terrorist attacks were aimed against the domination of the world by the US, they have failed and have done nothing to move the anti-imperialist struggle forward.

In the aftermath of the attacks, American politicians were quick to announce that this was a direct assault on democracy and civilisation – not true at all. These claims were quickly backed up by the likes of Tony Blair and other world leaders who wasted no time in declaring a "war against terrorism". Osama Bin Laden was blamed for starting this war, and the US/Britain and the EU are now ready to bomb Afghanistan back to the 'stone age'.

But the war will do nothing to stop terrorism. If anything, it will increase it. The real terrorists are Bush and Blair and the other leaders of NATO. This war that is being planned is about globalisation. The aim of the war is to give a pretext for the armed forces of the most powerful capitalist countries to back up their economic domination of the world with military might.

Many ordinary Americans do not understand why they were attacked. They are fed a daily media diet that the US is a great coun-



GOING TO WAR FOR THE CORPORATE WORLD

PIC FROM: WWW.ADBUSTERS.ORG

try which has made the world a better place. What they don't hear about is the fact that the military, political and economic actions of the US government has earned it the hatred of millions not just in the Middle East – but all over the world.

This is because the rulers of the USA dominate the globe, consign millions to poverty and debt, and back oppressive regimes; they daily violate national, human and democratic rights. This is not something that has just

happened – it has been going on for 50 years.

Over the last 10-15 years, the world has witnessed a massive expansion in global trade. Under the leadership of the US, Britain, the other EU countries and Japan have used their control of the IMF, the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation to dominate and dictate "globalisation" to the rest of the world.

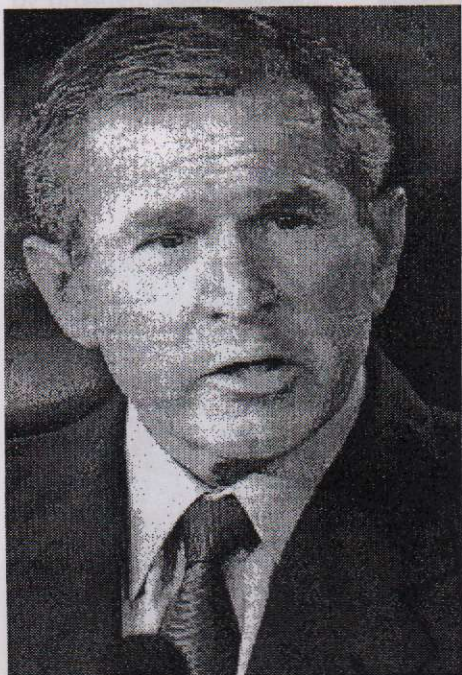
They have broken down any barriers to the

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**"We are a kind people. No one could have envisaged this act of terrorism."**

**George W. Bush JR.  
Camp David War room.  
Saturday 15th September.**

The president of the United States of America clearly has no sense of history, nor any knowledge of his own foreign policy. As a socialist, it is important to know why the US was targeted by terrorists. As far as George Bush Jr. would have you believe, it was as if a group of people woke up on Tuesday the 11th and, with nothing better to do, decided to kill 6,500 people.

The attack on the World Trade Center (WTC) and the Pentagon was not a random act. The WTC is the most visible symbol of US finance and the economic domination of the majority of the world. It is the symbol of wealth and power. The Pentagon is the heart of the US military machine. The attacks were a direct result of the actions of the US government that has led organisations to feel

there is no other way to fight back.

**Who are the real terrorists?**

America has pushed its economic agenda onto the rest of the world through its foreign policy interventions backed up with military might. This is not the first time they have gone after Bin Laden, and what are the effects? In the bombing of Sudan in 1998, the US acted in retaliation against the bombing of their embassies in Africa. It was believed that the factory was producing nerve gas; it was, in fact, producing 60% of the medicines used in Uganda. The death toll of the Ugandan population deprived of vital drugs has never been officially counted, but we can only guess how many suffered.

In Iraq, 200,000 Iraqis died during and in the immediate aftermath of the slaughter known as the Gulf War. Since then, at least a million civilians, half of them children, have died as a result of economic sanctions imposed by the US and Britain. On September 9th, 8 people were killed in southern Iraq when American and British

# alism - not against terrorism

profit system around the world. Their globalisation has meant the erosion of wages and conditions all over the world, as well as the constant threat of moving businesses to other countries to take advantage of cheaper wages.

It has meant the increased domination of the world by major corporations which has led to the unelected board rooms of the biggest corporations having more power than most elected parliaments.

Globalisation has meant that major corporations can use organisations, like the WTO, to lobby to overturn national laws that seek to protect workers rights or the environment on the grounds that such laws are a barrier to trade and investment.

The major powers have used their control of the purse strings of the World Bank and the IMF to force governments in developing countries to privatise state assets, like power companies, and to cut spending of health, education and welfare.

Even though it has been proved that the biggest cause of poverty in the third world is the debts owed to the IMF, the G8 and the big banks refuse to cancel third world debts (which they could easily afford to do) because this allows them to exercise control over the governments of third world countries.

Just as US and imperialist capital and multinational corporations have the right under WTO rules to do whatever they want, own what ever they want and go wherever

they wish, so the USA is now using the pretext of a war on terrorism to claim similar powers to take military action anywhere in the globe.

They are pulling together their collation of "democratic" nations to try and convince the world that they really care about ending terrorism and to provide a smoke screen for their real intent.

It is already clear that the expected revenge attack from the US will not be aimed simply at the terrorists responsible for the attack. Blair has been jetting around the world, building the so-called 'coalition against terrorism'.

This aims to be a broad coalition and includes countries like Pakistan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia who don't really care that much for democracy, freedom and human rights, although this fact seems to have bypassed most. The coalition will target any group or government that might oppose Western interests.

Former US Secretary of State and war criminal, Henry Kissinger has called for the US to attack Osama Bin Laden regardless of whether or not he had any part in the attack on the WTC! His rationale is that Bin Laden

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## Swedish anti-war demo

Here's a report of an extremely courageous action taken on Sunday in Sweden by **REVOLUTION and Workers Power (Arbetarmakt)**.

Yesterday in central Stockholm (Sept 15) we had an action against the terror of the US imperialism with about 16-17 members and sympathisers participating.

We were standing with banners saying "USA = the biggest terrorist", "USA kills millions" and "The terror of US imperialism must be smashed". This turned out to be a very positive experience. It got the immediate attention of people passing by, some being very aggressive against us, and others

supporting us and being aggressive against the ones being aggressive against us. It really polarised people. Especially, we got very positive reaction from the immigrants.

The public in Sweden is polarised, with one half supporting tougher measures of imperialism and another half being semi-pacifists and saying violence only creates more violence. I think the best argument was about the hypocrisy, that no silent minutes have been held for the Iraqi children, or other victims of imperialism. I think all Rev groups should get actively involved in the anti-war demonstrations and stand with banners condemning US imperialism, and thus see how the public will react.

# al terrorist?

planes bombed civilian areas. These bombings have gone on week in and week out for a decade.

In Palestine, the enduring illegal occupation by Israel would have collapsed long ago were it not for US backing. Since the Intifada uprising in September last year, over 700 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces, not to mention the people who have lost their homes in the West Bank. Only now are the Americans pushing for a resolution on the peace process because they are trying to leverage the Arab countries on board for the retaliation strikes on Afghanistan.

In Colombia, the US are funding the government and equipping them with helicopters in a 'war against drugs' which is truthfully a war against the Farq, a guerrilla group, and the peasant population. The countryside is being laid to waste by defoliation sprays that are supposed to wipe out the coca plants, but also decimate legitimate food crops, effectively starving the peasants.

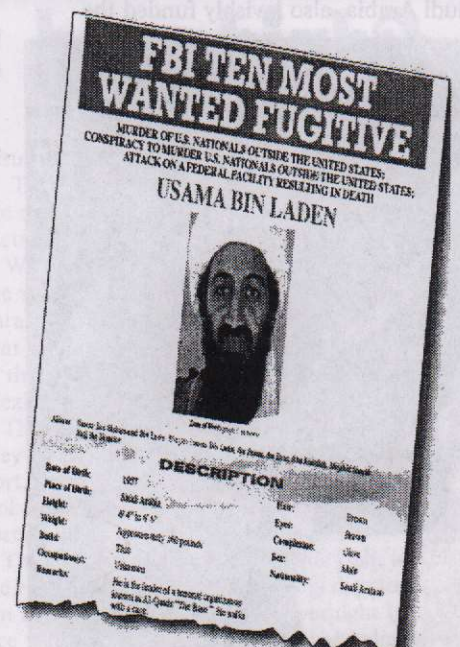
In Serbia, the US looked on as Milosevich

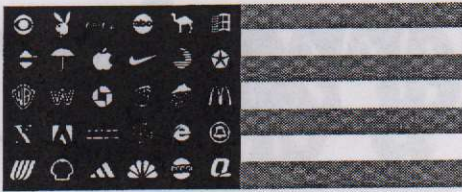
attempted to ethnically cleanse Kosovo for over a decade. The Kosovans that took up arms against their oppressor were labelled 'terrorists'. That is until Milosevich proved an unreliable ally. Then the Americans tried to bomb Serbia out of existence.

Every day 35,000 people die of starvation and poverty even though the world produces enough food to feed everyone double. Is this not a form of terrorism imposed on the world through US backed IMF structural adjustment programs?

When world leaders speak of terrorism, we must speak of terrorism as well. We must talk about the suffering of thousands killed directly or indirectly by the US through its foreign policy. The actions of the terrorists on 11th of September show that the deep seated divisions caused by U.S. imperialism can explode at any time and at any place. We must be prepared with the revolutionary answer to the problems caused by capitalism.

by Simon on the front line  
(in Willsden)





## THE CORPORATE FLAG OF WAR

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might launch such attacks and, as such, is a threat to western security. There has been leaked governmental reports exposing the fact that America was planning military strikes on Bin Laden and the Taliban for over two months.

There are calls for pre-emptive strikes on any groups who might carry out such attacks and a proposal to allow the CIA to carry out overseas assassinations again (did they ever really stop?). 'Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists', warns Bush, who is gleefully seizing the opportunity to consolidate Western capitalist hegemony under the guise of defending liberal democracy.

Already the governments of Europe are trying to infringe on our democratic rights.

Blair wasted no time in planning the next phase of stripping away civil liberties under

the guise of anti-terrorism. Under New Labour, we have already seen the removal of the right to trial-by-jury, double jeopardy, and implementation of the catch-all anti-terrorism act of 2000.

It has now been suggested that ID cards may be introduced in the UK. This has been supported by large sections of the right-wing media who ignore the fact that ID cards would not have stopped the attack in New York. If ID cards are introduced, there is one very likely scenario, as with the 'stop and search' laws in the 70's: checks will predominantly affect young Asian and black men. The already institutionally racist police force will be given yet another weapon against an already alienated ethnic minority youth.

Plans for a pan-European police force, first touted after Genoa, have now been accelerated. There have been proposals including a common legal definition of 'terrorism', and a Europe wide arrest warrant, which means a suspect being detained in Berlin under a warrant issued in London.

One of the proposed definitions of a terrorist act includes 'damage to state or government facilities, means of public transport, infrastructure facilities, places of public use, and property'. As Statewatch points out, 'property' covers public and private. This could be used against wide range of demon-

stration and protests - ranging from the non-violent CND protests against a US nuclear missile bases in the UK to the protests in Gothenburg and Genoa. As with last year's anti-terrorism bill and previous football hooligan legislation, it will not be long before these powers are extended to cover anti-capitalist protesters.

The ruling Western elite are now preparing to attack one of the most impoverished nations on earth that has already been bled dry by twenty years of continuous conflict. After the Soviet occupation and then the bloody civil war, the US backed Mujahadeen fought amongst themselves for what remained of their country. What is there left for the West to bomb? Another humanitarian crisis is taking shape as war-weary Afghans flee the country in terror. Over one million refugees are expected to cross the border into Pakistan to escape Western bombs. Two million are already refugees and UN aid agencies reckon that six million are near starvation due to drought.

When the bombs begin to fall over Kabul, there will be no tearful interviews with the relatives of the dead, no tributes to the Afghan emergency services, no quotes from last phone calls saying 'I don't know if I'm going to make it and I just wanted to tell you that I love you', or headlines screaming 'evil', 'cowardly' or 'murder', but it will be murder, just like it was in New York.

This war is going to be about capitalism and ensuring that it continues unchallenged to impoverish and destroy the world. That is why we should be against the war and against capitalism. The only way we are ever going to end terrorism, war and poverty is not with bombs and with globalisation, but with the overthrow of capitalism.

**Stop the war.**

**No revenge attacks**

**Defend democratic rights**

**Build the anti-war movement**

**Hands off Afghanistan.**

# Who are the Taliban?

by Yuen in Lewisham

The rulers of Afghanistan, the Taliban, have their origins in the Cold War but only emerged as a distinct group in 1994 during the civil war among the factions of the Mujahadeen. The word Taliban simply means 'students' in Arabic.

The Soviet army invaded Afghanistan in 1979 to prop up the secular, nationalist pro-Soviet government of the PDPA. The West championed the Mujahadeen. The US supplied over US\$2 billion over a ten year period in funds and munitions, including 900 Stinger missiles. Gulf states, such as Saudi Arabia, also lavishly funded the

Mujahadeen and it has emerged that fighters, including Bin Laden, were trained by the CIA and the SAS.

The Taliban is an Islamic fundamentalist group. Since they came to power any progressive gains were reversed. Radio, television, music, and dancing are banned, Sharia law has been imposed and there are public executions in football stadiums. The Shia minority and Hindus are persecuted, with Hindus forced to wear markings to distinguish them, like Jews in Nazi Germany. The ancient Bamiyan Buddhas were destroyed in March 2001 when the Taliban declared them an affront to Islam.

The religious police flog men who do not have beards and go into peoples homes to see if women are covered up sufficiently. If they are not, the husband is taken into custody and flogged for 'not controlling his wife'.

Most disturbing of all is the oppression of women and reassertion of patriarchy. Women are denied reproductive rights, education, the right to work and there are strict penalties for women who do not cover up their bodies completely. Women doctors, nurses and teachers are forbidden to work even though Afghanistan has a desperate shortage of these professions.

The Taliban is a reactionary, bigoted group. We do not support them. Neither do we support US imperialism as the lesser of two evils. The only solution is for the workers and peasants of Afghanistan to unite and cast off the shackles of theocracy, and create a democratic state under workers control.



# patriotism fuels racism

by dan in deptford

In the wake of the tragic events that happened in New York, a surge of nationalism and patriotism has swept across the US and the rest of the Western world. While this in itself can blind people from the real causes of violence and war (capitalism and Western imperialism), it also drags in its tow the spectre of prejudice and racism.

We have already witnessed the death of four Asian and Arabic people in the US, an attack in Britain on an Afghan taxi driver who was left paralysed from the neck down and a nineteen year-old woman who was attacked with baseball bats. Mosques have been burned to the ground, Islamic schools forced to close and in Australia a bus full of school children was stoned by a passers-by. Communities, already under siege from the racist policies of the Labour Party, now face

an even more frightening future. New Labour's condemnation of racism is just lip-service; in reality it has fanned the flames of hatred ever since it was elected with its shameful scapegoating of asylum seekers.

The result was an upsurge in BNP activity, and in turn the government just pandered to their demands (redirecting funds from the Asian communities in Oldham, who are already the poorest community in the area). Now it carries on this policy with statements about fighting for the civilised world, talking of evil Islamic terrorists and declaring that 'you're either with us or against us'.

The sad truth is that once again the most impoverished and exploited people are made the scapegoats for the barbarism of capitalist governments.

The Afghan people have faced the most appalling atrocities in the past twenty years

and have been ruled by the Taliban under a regime of fear and oppression. A regime that was put into place by the US to teach the Commies a lesson when the forerunners to the Taliban were fighting the USSR. Indeed, Bin Laden was trained by the CIA.

We should do all we can to expose the fact that it is Western foreign policy and not innocent people who are responsible for the terrorist acts in the US. Nationalism and prejudice are rooted in the interests of the upper classes and in their policies of trying to divide the working classes.

Racism will never be the answer to anyone's problems. If we truly want to end war and terrorism, more than ever we should be trying to build a revolutionary movement and fighting racism at every turn. Only then, with the overthrow of capitalism, will there ever be an end to this perpetual cycle of war and suffering.

## DEBATE: WHO DO YOU WANT TO WIN?

Over the next few weeks, as the US and Britain prepare their military assault on Afghanistan, socialists and anti-war activists will be asked to answer one question: whose side are you on?

Not whether you wanted the war or not, now that there is one anyway, who do you want to win?

Here is a contribution to that debate.

As opponents of the global capitalist system, it simply isn't our duty to support "our country" in whatever war our rulers have dragged us into to defend their system, their rule and their profits. Ultimately, we want a world without countries and a humanity free of all forms of oppression and exploitation. The only wars we can support are those which fight against oppression and exploitation – such as the wars fought by the Vietnamese and other Third World peoples

to achieve their independence.

In wars between the capitalists over their control of the rest of the world – like the First World War – we should continue the class struggle in all the countries affected with a parallel movement against war. If continuing the struggle against capitalism hampers our own country's war effort, then that's just too bad – and we should expect exactly the same attitude towards "their own" country's war effort from the opponents of the system in the "enemy" country.

But this coming war will be an attack by the world's richest countries against a weakened and desperately poor people.

In this instance, we are not just indifferent to Britain and America's war effort – we want it to fail.

This has nothing to do with the Western countries being democracies and Afghanistan being a dictatorship. If Bush overthrows the

Taliban, it won't mean democracy in Afghanistan – rather, it will mean another dictatorship imposed by the US.

For us it will mean more attacks on civil liberties in the name of "anti-terrorism".

On the other hand, if the Afghans successfully defend their country against US aggression, it won't mean a fundamentalist Islamic state for us here – but it will mean a defeat for imperialism world-wide.

Exploited and oppressed countries across the world will feel emboldened to struggle for their freedom once they have seen that the world's self-appointed policeman can be defeated.

Best of all, it might give the Afghan people the strength and confidence they need to overthrow the Taliban – an outcome that we should be entirely happy to see.

But that's their job. Our job is to fight against our governments in our countries.

## Bush says jump: Blair asks how high?

by marcus

Of all the Western leaders, Tony Blair has been the quickest to back George Dubya's calls for a "crusade" against "rogue states". He says that "we, the democracies", must use force to defeat terrorism – and our press crassly repeats this line, suggesting that France and Germany are "soft on terrorism" for not showing sufficient enthusiasm for war.

This isn't the first time Britain has asked "how high" when the US says "jump". In the war with Iraq, in the bombing of Belgrade, in America's support for Israel's occupation of Palestine, Blair has continued the policy of previous British governments in supporting every twist and turn of US foreign policy. Britain's subservience to America is now almost an ingrained part of our national culture.

What we are supposed to believe is that the

United States, as the world's largest capitalist "democracy", and Britain, as its closest ally, are uniquely qualified to defend democratic values world-wide. This point is underlined by our alliance against Germany during the Second World War and against "communism" during the Cold War.

By implication, other Western countries are tainted by defeat or collaboration, and pursue narrow foreign policies based on pure self-interest, far removed from the supposedly selfless principles espoused by our fearless leaders.

This is sickening hypocrisy. Bush and Blair head states which – through debt, sanctions and IMF-imposed austerity programmes - kill hundreds of thousands of children every year through poverty and preventable diseases. As well as making a fortune selling weapons to all sides in the conflicts which arise as a

result of this impoverishment.

These outspoken opponents of terrorism are quite happy to install and support military dictatorships in Latin America.

What this is really about is the control of the world's wealth and resources by a tiny parasitic minority. The giant multinationals that roam the Earth in search of profits reside in the West – even if they have factories in Mexico or Indonesia.

They naturally expect the politicians who they keep in power - through financial support, links to the state machine and their control of the press – to defend their interests abroad when they are threatened.

Their most important democratic right is the right to make money – and any dictator can be turned into a democrat overnight (or vice versa) depending on whether he helps or hinders them.

# CHALLENGING INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

The MacPherson Report (1999) defines institutional racism as: "The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people."

Institutional racism is a form of racism which is subtle and more pervasive than the filth spewed by racist bigots, such as the National Front. It rests at the heart of British society and permeates all of its organisations and structures.

The institution which is the most obviously racist is the police force. The police murder of Derek Bennett, in Brixton on 16th July 2001 was a particularly extreme example of institutional racism, but every day we see examples of police racism. Black people are more likely to be stopped and searched or arrested by police; charged with a criminal offence rather than cautioned; remanded in custody rather than allowed bail; sentenced to jail at the end of a trial; and given the dirtier and more humiliating jobs when in prison. Black people are disproportionately represented in Britain's prisons. The percentage of Afro-Caribbeans in the



prison population stands at 10%. For female prisoners, the rate is even higher at 20%.

Racist discrimination pervades educational and occupational institutions. Children of Afro-Caribbean origin are 4-6 times more likely to be excluded from school than their white counterparts for similar behaviour.

Some 1,200 people approach the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) each year with complaints of discrimination at work or in trying to get a job.

A Trades Union Congress (TUC) report, launched on 26th July 2001, revealed that "Black and Asian workers

face appalling levels of verbal, and sometimes physical, racist abuse in Britain's workplaces."

A nationwide study of the NHS trusts showed that 57.7% of NHS ethnic minority staff had either witnessed or experienced harassment of staff or patients that they regarded as racist.

People from ethnic minorities are discriminated against when it comes to housing. A common example of this was shown by CRE investigators who found that while the London Borough of Tower Hamlets had quickly rehoused 2 white families after dangerous levels of asbestos were found in their homes. It took 7 months of campaigning and legal

pressure before a Bangladeshi family were rehoused.

Institutional racism highlights the racial bias within British society and provides an important understanding of how western society works. Implicit within institutional racism are certain 'rules of engagement' with black people, based on the theory of white superiority and black inferiority. This theory was developed and sharpened as a device to rule during imperialist expansion, and has helped to create the first and third world divide. The post-war demand for cheap labour from the Indian sub-continent and the Caribbean reproduced the third world within the first.

Institutional racism perpetuates social inequalities and maintains the status quo. In order to fight inequality within our society, we need to question and challenge the status quo. We need to fight racist abuse and discrimination and all social inequality at the level of the individual, the organisation and, most importantly of all, society. That means fighting the system that we live under - Capitalism!



Screenings of the film **INJUSTICE**, about deaths in police custody, has been pulled from cinemas across the country because of threats of court

actions from the cops. At one cinema, the filmgoers got around this by occupying the cinema; the management left the building and the punters took over the projection. Look out for it at a cinema near you!

## FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

How is it that in a time of supposed equality - both between sexes and races - a flagrant abuse of human rights is being conducted by a large percentage of the world's population? Often dubbed down and referred to as 'female circumcision' but more accurately known as 'female genital mutilation' (FGM), this often life threatening procedure involves the removal of the clitoral hood and labia before the vagina is sewn up. This operation is done without anaesthetic and can be performed by another woman who will use a razor blade, knife, broken glass and in some cases her teeth to mutilate the vagina. This practice serves no function except to prove to a husband that his wife (usually by an arranged marriage) is a virgin. Due to her sewn up vagina, urinating will become a daily torment, to engage in sexual intercourse her husband will literally have to tear her apart, and when she is giving birth her baby risks suffocation. This practice has become so much a part of African culture that the UN estimates 6,000 girls a day are subjected to it in 28 different countries in Africa. But unquestioned as it is, FGM has spread to US and Europe via emigrating families. African communities save up to fly a 'circumciser' over. When this is not possible, families take matters into their own hands. "One father in New York City turned up the stereo so his neighbours couldn't hear the screams. Then he cut off his daughters genitals with a steak knife." -Waris Dirie, UN ambassador.

FGM represents the continued suppression of women and women's rights by men. During a debate on this issue the question was raised whether if the practice was inflicted on men - ie if men's genitals were cut open and then sewn up again - would this barbaric custom continue? While the question doesn't solve the problem, it highlights the inequality of sexes in African countries. FGM is a controversial topic as it can be 'excused' under the line 'it's part of their culture'. But when this cultural heritage involves nothing more than asserting male superiority by mutilating a perfectly healthy woman, placing her at risk of death, infection or disease, and ensuring that she will never enjoy sex, we must ask whether anything so disgusting can be forgiven via the label of 'culture'.

However, the spread of FGM is causing more problems. Doctors in first world countries are now faced with a moral dilemma: if they are asked to perform FGM they can do so using anaesthetic and sterile implements. Or they can refuse on ethical grounds which means the girl will be operated on anyway without anaesthetic or aftercare. Most doctors agree to perform the surgery simply to ensure that the girl will not bleed to death. The view is: if it's going to happen anyway, it may as well be done by a professional in sanitary conditions. And while certain states attempt to make the practice illegal, it seems clear that FGM will just go underground and the suffering will increase.

by jess in camden



# sweatshop sla<sup>er</sup>ery

Youth, Vitality and Passion are virtues of Nike advertising. Sporting personalities like Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods encourage us to 'Just Do It'. The message is loud and clear; Nike helps you pursue fulfilment, idealism and zest. Yet, Nike workers in developing countries haven't any of these things. Behind the gleaming façade of life affirming advertising, there is a wholly sinister side to Nike – the sweatshops.

by  
ayesha  
in new cross

Unfortunately, Nike are not alone. Many other 'fun' brands, such as Gap and Adidas, also use sweatshop labour. However, in this article I am using examples that were found in Nike factories, to expose the 'improvements' Nike have pledged in their factories.

Phil Knight, the head executive for Nike made a nice little speech on improving sweatshop conditions in May 1998. One of these 'improvements' include cutting down on dangerous toxic omission in the factories. The omissions have to satisfy government health and safety standards, and the results of monitoring were to be made available to the public. Despite this pledge, one factory in Vietnam was recently found to have toxin omission 177% above the legal Vietnamese limit.

Now Nike has now gone back on their pledge by refusing to make results available to the public.

Nike don't pay their workers a living wage equivalent to their local economy. Many Nike workers are paid below the minimum wage, and do not have the prospect of getting a raise.

Another contentious issue for Nike is the use of child labour. The use of child labour is a complex issue to address. Adults are not employed as they are supposed to be paid more and so children are forced to work in order to support their family.

Knight pledged that workers need to be at least 16 to produce apparel and 18 to produce footwear. Recent studies, including a televised investigation by Panorama, has revealed that Nike have forgotten about this 'improvement' as well.

Nike pledged to expand its education program making free high school equivalency courses available to all workers

can we  
stop it?  
yes, we  
can!



in Nike footwear factories. Yet, the workers are more worried about getting sleep after a 17 hour shift than to actually partake in any educational scheme.

These paltry pledges didn't even include minimising working hours or increasing wages. **Nike is a company that spent \$500 million dollars on advertising in 1997 yet are unwilling to pay their workers a living wage.**

Nike force their workers to spend 12-14 hours on a shift in unventilated conditions. The brutality includes verbal and physical abuse, and even worse sexual abuse. The factory managers effectively act as if they own their workers, breaching their basic human rights. According to one study, these workers are beaten if they have made any mistakes. They are faced with the degradation of requiring permission to use the bathroom or to drink water.

To avoid paying for maternal leave, women are forced to undergo pregnancy tests, which they have to pay for themselves. If they are found to be pregnant, they are fired instantly. Women are forced to take the pill. The bosses are taking away their basic right to have children!

If this isn't proof enough that Nike treat their workers as faceless slaves, here's another: on a 12-14 hour shift they are only allowed to visit the toilet twice. These heinous rules are in place to keep the workers demoralised and frightened. This is further proved by the fact that workers are not allowed to talk at any time. Also they are not allowed to form unions, giving them no route to challenge the deplorable conditions they have to work under.

It is clear that Nike left unmonitored will never improve the working conditions of their workers because they are only out for profit. The main aim of these multinational companies is to maximise their profits by mimnimising the wages they pay out. That is why Nike continually shifts its factories to countries with low labour standards and wages (and horrible human rights abuses), like China.

What is needed is an independent trade union of the workers that stretches across national boundaries. No Sweat is an activists' network that provides international solidarity for these workers through protest and direct action, putting pressure on companies like Nike and Gap to sign up to a code of conduct. With international links and support, the sweatshop worker themselves can make real changes.

## COMING EVENTS :

GIVE NIKE HELL! protest against nike using child and sweated labour. picket nike town, oxford circus, WED, OCT.31, 6pm

ANTI-WTO ACTION, to coincide with other international actions No Sweat will be building for a 'tour of shame' down oxford street, FRI, NOV 9 (get the day off)

ACTIVISTS' CONFERENCE to plan campaigning against sweatshop labour, university of london union, malet street, wcl, SAT, NOV 24, 12 till 6

# A letter from a sensible student

A friend of mine did PPE at Cambridge. She spent three years protesting about everything under the sun and studying very little, and somehow still managed to scrape a First through pure brilliance. She now earns sixteen thousand a year teaching Politics to a bunch of comprehensive school sixth-formers in Essex. What a tragic waste.

I'm never going to be like that. Ever.

I'm going to spend the next three years studying and trying to get a job, with the emphasis on the latter. I don't care where or who with, either, so long as it's well-paid and respectable. In fact, fuck respectable, I can live with well-paid. Someone has to sell weapons of mass destruction to Third World governments, after all.

The problem is, how to do it? I admit that I've fucked up a bit already, to be honest. I'm here to do History, when I should really be doing Business Studies. Or Economics. Or Computer Science. Still, it's too late now. Bosses don't like it when students change courses: it suggests a bit too much instability and free-thinking.

One thing I should definitely do is join a university society. Employers love that: active involvement, positions of responsibility - although not too much responsibility, obviously. I have got my studies to think about.

The thing is, there's a myriad of choices. Though bungee-jumping and beer appreciation don't strike me as the sort of thing that Goldman Sachs look for in their applicants. It's a pity I'm not at Oxford, really - then I could always join the Union and get down to some serious business. Just imagine all the important people I could meet there. There's Radovan Karadzic, Kenneth Clarke and Kermit the Frog, from what I hear. All we're likely to get is a visit from Neil and Christine Hamilton.

I'm not as shallow as most people



think, though. I do realise that at some point over the next three years, I'm going to have to work - my parents might be indulgent, but their funds and patience are not inexhaustible. I can't just do any old job, though. Let's face it - pulling pints is for plebs. And as for anything more manual than that - let's just not go there, OK?

I'm told that Procter & Gamble pay you quite well to spend six weeks over the summer doing the photocopying and getting the coffee for their big-nob marketing execs. Looks quite good on your CV as well. So, I suppose I should find out if there's anyone in second year who's got an internship. Or anyone in third year who's got an offer.

Or anyone who's just graduated who's already working for the fuckers. It hardly makes me a bad person to ask, does it?

Which sets me thinking: what I really need to do is meet people - the sort worth meeting, if you know what I mean. I hear Tiger Tiger's quite good for meeting the sort of people I'll need to know - although I've also heard it's a bit naff, and there are other places. Still, I can always find out where they are. I'll just have to meet the right people.

There's one group I won't be joining though: that Revo lot. I'm sure they're all very well-intentioned, but let's face it - how many members have they got? - and frankly, I've got more important things to do with my time than whinge on about student debt and the Palestinians. Like getting a job, for example.

I mean, how would I explain to my parents that I had been locked up in Genoa for protesting at the police while they're only trying to do their job? Or that I've fallen in with a bunch of homosexuals, refugees and long-haired, baggy-trousered drug addicts who smell of patchouli oil? I could always say that I was trying to make a point about racism, global warming, genocide or the Third World debt - but they care about as much about those things as I do. And how are people like us affected by those issues, anyway? I've got my own solution to student debt, and people in the Third World can take care of themselves.

Just imagine - three years at university worrying about the world's problems instead of your own. I bet they're the sort of people who think that being a student should be about developing as a human being and trying to understand your social environment. And they couldn't be more wrong - because I know exactly where that leads. They'll all end up like that friend of mine at Cambridge.

And I'm never going to be like that. Ever.

## IN A WORLD OF LIES AND GREED,

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# Blair says cut back Students say fight back

by Tom in Sheffield

You've started university with £1,075 tuition fees, you're having to work just to get by, maybe with a £20,000 debt at the end of your course, but you can't be bothered to do anything about it. **Get off your arse and join the fightback for free education.** Don't let the government get away with this attack on your education.

When Labour introduced tuition fees and abolished the maintenance grant, it dealt a double blow to students. Not only did we have to pay for our education but we had to take out a loan to pay for our upkeep, forcing 2/3 of students into work with their education seriously affected. Many working class students whose parents can't help with living costs either drop out or rethink about applying in the first place. They say that poor students don't have to pay tuition fees, but this only applies to students who combined parental income is less than £23,000. What a joke! Education is a right not a privilege!

We need to build mass movements that are able to take on the government. Using non-payment campaigns, demos, and occupations to force Tony Blair to back down. We need to make the movement democratic by building

action committees of students and workers, fighting fees and cuts in education. We need to elect delegates from each section of students who are accountable to the people they represent and who are immediately recallable if they try and sell us out. Action committees can be used to transform the NUS from a bureaucratic, toothless organisation into a real fighting force with grass-roots democracy. This way we'll have an NUS which really fights for student rights.

We must use our strongest weapon – occupations. We can massively disrupt the running of the university by occupying admin buildings and putting control of the university into our hands. The occupation needs to be democratically controlled and run by the students using regular mass meetings to inform and discuss the tactics to use, and with elected action committees to oversee the running of the occupation. The occupation needs to be built and spread to other universities so that you're not isolated. A wave of occupations across the country will bring Tony Blair to his knees.

Labour are selling off the halls of residence under their Public Private Partnership (PPP) schemes, which is just another way of letting

private companies rip us off and squeeze more profits out of us. Privatisation doesn't work, just look at the railways. Privatised halls would bring rent hikes, worse conditions, job losses, cuts in wages and conditions for cleaners, canteen staff and other workers in the halls as private companies cut corners to make a quick-buck.

Join the fight for free education, get organised and build links with campaigns at other universities. Get the education workers unions on your side. With true democracy and organised action we can beat Blair and let him know where he can stick his fees.

**Revolution calls for:**

- \* Abolition of tuition fees
- \* Replace loans with a full maintenance grant of £7 an hour (£280 per week)
- \* Tax the rich to fund grants
- \* Democratise the NUS with grass-roots action
- \* Stop all privatisation schemes, scrap Labour's PPP
- \* Agitate, organise, occupy!

## Kick Religion out of Schools

by Xiaozhou

With slipping standards within secondary education, the labour government has promised to make changes that should bring the success of primary schools to secondary schools.

The government's white paper states that it supports inclusive faith schools with the aim of "adding to the inclusiveness and diversity of the school system".

However, the existence of these schools causes problems for both pupils and parents. Pupils have to put up with religious propaganda, and parents who feel the need to send their child to the best school they can, have no say over the religious beliefs being imposed on their children.

The white paper also states that they will allow "well-led schools to take more responsibility for themselves" and emphasises how the school will have a degree of freedom "but retains its responsibilities to

the wider system". In conjunction with the new proposals on faith schools, these changes will no doubt mean that when one faith school becomes better than another, they will have greater control over its curriculum. We know that this will happen sooner or later purely from the varying abilities of schools that presently exist. What effect will that have on the local community? Parents will now have the choice of either sending their children to a failing school or to send them to a school where their beliefs will be challenged daily.

Being a pupil in a church of England school, I have first hand experience as to how much a school will really try to get its pupils to take on its moral code. By putting regulations as to what

the students can and cannot do even outside of school, they control a large portion of a student's life. No matter how much they preach about the acceptance of all and however much they stress that they are not there to convert, they have total control over the moral education of the pupil. Every morning, teachers give speeches trying to win people over to their morals. No pupil, parent and no one that represents the community chooses what is being said. Parents will always choose the school that gives their child the best education and that means schools will be put into competition to be the best. However, when the schools also represent a religious belief, it will become a competition between religions and that will only lead to racial tension when Muslims are put into Catholic schools, Catholics into Sikh schools etc, etc.



# THE EXTREMELY ROUGH GUIDE

## TO THE Anti-capitalist

The anti-capitalist movement has grown immeasurably, bringing together numerous activists including revolutionary socialists, anarchists, environmentalists, trade unionists and reformists. In the West the focus has been on a number of spectacular demonstrations that have targeted the institutions and summit meetings of the rich and powerful, protesting against their neo-liberal agenda, their environmental destruction, corporate exploitation, and sham democracy.

Below is a guide to some of the key protests that have shaped the movement.



J 18 - L O N D O N

The Carnival Against Capitalism on June 18th 1999 really kicked off the anti-capitalist movement. It brought together the diverse range of protest groups, and specifically targeted the belly of the beast - the heart of finance capital - the City of London.

Organised by Reclaim the Streets, the protests of up to 10,000 people caught the state with its pants down. The morning saw a number of different actions against corporations and financial institutions. Revolution organised a protest against oil giant BP, highlighting the funding of paramilitary death squads in the oil fields of Columbia to kill trade unionists and wipe peasants off their land.

In the afternoon, a mass street party divided in two and wound around the streets of the City before blocking the streets in front of the LIFFE building. The peaceful street party was violently attacked by the police who ran over one protester with a police van and repeatedly baton charged the dancing

crowds. This led to some of the most serious street battles seen in Britain since the Poll Tax riot. For the first time, the term 'anti-capitalism' was on everybody's lips.

N 3 0 - S E A T T L E

If J18 had been the first anybody had heard of anti-capitalism, it was the protests in Seattle later that year that really made everybody sit up and take notice.

80,000 activists and campaigners from all over North America and the world attempted to shut down the World Trade Organisation meeting. The WTO is dominated by the economic superpowers and acts to break down trade barriers amongst its member countries. This means scrapping laws which safeguard standards, protect workers rights and the environment.

The protests brought together the organised workers movement and the anti-capitalists, the teamsters and the turtles. Steel workers broke away from their union leaders to join the thousands already blockading the surrounding streets. As robocop riot police gassed people sitting in the streets and used pepper spray in their eyes, the images were flashed around the world. Marshall law was declared as the authorities continued to fire gas canisters and rubber bullets into the crowds. A curfew was declared on the city of Seattle for the first time since WW II.

Seattle saw the emergence of the black bloc, a movement which aims to fight capitalism through property destruction. Starbuck's, Nike and Gap were specifically targeted. The main protests were organised through the use of autonomous affinity groups, small groups acting independently of each other. One of the limitations of this form of organisation was shown when some groups chose to leave the main blockade to protest elsewhere, undermining the whole action.

The protests were a huge success. The WTO was forced to call a halt to its meeting a day early, failing to push through many of the reforms it had hoped would further open up the third world economies to the western multinationals. Capitalism was on the defensive.



S 2 6 - P R A G U E

The protest against the World Bank/IMF summit in Prague was the first truly pan-European, militant, anti-capitalist demonstration. Revolution went there with the slogan 'Turn Prague into Seattle', to repeat the hugely successful US protests and see the further integration of the anti-capitalist and the workers movement.

Unfortunately, the misleaders of the major unions in Western Europe gave the protests no active support and so a demonstration on the scale of Seattle was not to be repeated. However we did succeed in disrupting and cutting short the meeting, sending 14,000 bankers and bureaucrats home a day early.

The organisers INPEG had called for a three pronged attack to surround the congress centre at every point of approach. The demonstrators were divided into a Pink, Yellow and Blue block. Revolution marched on the Yellow block which aimed to take the main entrance to the centre. In the forefront of this block was Ya Basta, the Italian white overall movement which came padded up and fully prepared to defend itself in a confrontation with the forces of the state.

The division into three distinct blocks reflected real divisions in the movement. The Blue block was made up of black block anarchists, the Pink block was largely non-violent with many dressed up as fairies, and the Yellow block was made up of workers and trade unionists who were prepared to stand their ground and fight back when attacked, but were against the property destruction of the back block.

A 2 0 - Q U E B E C

Six kilometres of three metre high chain-linked fence anchored in concrete, 8,000 riot police, 1,200

**DE**by Kuldip in  
Clapham

# Movement

Direct Action.

J 2 1 - G E N O A

300,000 on the streets of Genoa, the biggest anti-capitalist demonstration to date. The attempts of the police to criminalise the movement, to intimidate us off the streets, to repress us out of existence has failed.

The protesters had converged on the Italian sea port to welcome the G8 leaders, the eight most powerful men on earth. It's at the bi-annual G8 summit that they thrash out the agenda they'll pursue at other international meetings, such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO. Like in Quebec, the leaders had to surround themselves with a ring of steel.

By the time Revolution had left Genoa, we had witnessed the brutal assassination of Carlo Giuliani, shot in the face; we'd witnessed the horrific premeditated attack on a school building where many activists were bludgeoned in their sleeping bags; and we'd experienced the suffocating weight of oppression that strangled the city as we searched for a safe place to sleep out of reach of the fascistic police.

After the shooting of three protesters with live ammunition in Gothenburg barely a month before, the stakes had already been raised dramatically. But the sheer weight of the state repression shocked the world. In Italy in the wake of Carlo Giuliani's murder and in many cities around the world 100,000's marched in solidarity.

There were three days of protests, beginning with a 30,000 strong protest in support of immigrants and asylum seekers. On the second day, Revolution groups from across Europe joined the Ya Basta demonstration, which was by far the biggest, most militant and intended to make a direct assault on the fortress Red Zone to stop the summit. The final day witnessed a huge show of strength: 250,000 people, mostly Italian workers, marched through the port city cheered on by local inhabitants waving from their balconies.

Genoa was a huge inspiration, a glimpse of what we are capable of but it also showed that the movement is not united in either its strategy or its goals. Thrashing out these differences will be vital as we continue our assault on capitalism in the years to come.

**THE STRUGGLE IN  
THE THIRD WORLD**

One aspect of the global anti-capitalist movement which gets little coverage in the West is the

struggle in the third world. It is here that the effects of the neo-liberal policies, the structural adjustment programmes, the deregulation, the sweeping away of any legislation that stands in the way of profit is most sharply felt.

But our brothers and sisters in the non imperialist world do not take these attacks lying down. Huge strikes, occupations and direct action have shown they are willing to fight.

Many countries have been rocked by general strikes: from South Africa, where the ANC now bleed dry the very people who fought to put them in power, to India, which last year witnessed the biggest general strike the world has ever seen.

In Bolivia, strikes and demonstrations toppled the government when it privatised the water supply and even arrested people collecting rain water! Turkey, Equador and South Korea have all seen huge protests against IMF-inspired price rises and job cuts.

One of the most dynamic struggles against IMF policies is taking place in Argentina where the World Bank last month agreed an \$8 billion dollar loan on the precondition that the government doesn't spend more than it earns in taxes. This means public sector workers will face wage cuts and reductions in pensions, whilst the IMF money is used to pay back interest on previous loans to Western banks. Some workers are even being paid in vouchers (called Patacones) which can only be traded for some goods.

Argentina has witnessed four general strikes this year alone and mass demonstrations are a regular occurrence. Even the unemployed workers have started a militant campaign to fight for their rights.

One thing is clear from these struggles: as long as capitalism spreads it's poverty, misery and despair around the world, the anti-capitalist movement will be there to fight back, saying **ONE WORLD, ONE BATTLE!**



troops with another 10,000 on standby! This was the Canadian government's response to the anti-capitalist movement. Thousands of activists and campaigners were turned away on the US border as the circus of over 6,000 delegates rolled into town for the meeting of the FTAA.

The FTAA aims to set up a free trade block encompassing all of the Americas bar Cuba. It would give transnational corporations the power to legally challenge state provision and regulation of every public service from health care, education and social security to environmental protection and workplace safety.



The 40, 000 protesters were drawn from all walks of life. Significantly the demonstration had the support of the Canadian trade unions.

The state forces did not hold back. Clouds of tear gas hung over Quebec City; demonstrators were attacked regardless of whether they were in the 'non-violent' yellow zone or the red zone were all protest was declared illegal. Like in Seattle the trade union leaders tried to keep their rank and file members away from the rest of the anti-capitalist demonstrators, but the union members had other ideas. As protestors defied the tear gas to storm the fence, dubbed 'the wall of shame', they were joined by the thousands of trade unionists.

Quebec showed the potential of our movement when the conscience anti-capitalists team up with the masses of the organised working class. The Canadian postal workers union said that they were so impressed by the tactics of the anti-capitalists that they would be putting resources into training their own members in Non Violent

# UNITY IN ACTION!

by Sean in Stratford

The anti-capitalist movement has grown all over the world since it burst on to the political map when 80,000 anti-capitalist youth and trade unionists took to the streets in Seattle and stopped the World Trade Organisation from meeting.

Seattle inspired tens of thousands of people all over the world to organise and fight back against global capitalism. In the Third World, millions are fighting back against IMF imposed poverty. In the West, tens of thousands have protested at every meeting of the IMF, World Bank, EU and the G8. Socialists, anarchists, anti-debt campaigners, anti-sweat-shop activists, greens and trade unionist have taken part in common actions to protest against the misery of capitalism. Revolution has taken part on all these demonstrations, most recently in Genoa.

Genoa marked a turning point for the anti-capitalist movement. The 250,000 strong protests met with massive repression, which led to the death of one protester and the illegal detention and torture of hundreds more. The leaders of the world made it clear they were going to repress the anti-capitalists. The bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York, and the war drive of the US and EU will also be used against the anti-capitalist movement. So what do we do?

The repression faced by the protesters in Genoa will not go away. In fact it is on the increase. The governments of the EU and US are already planning to hold a police conference in Holland in October on how to combat anti-capitalist protests.

Anti-terrorist and anti football hooligan laws are also being used against the anti-capitalist movement. We can also expect the excuse of fighting terrorism to be used to limit and ban our actions.

**But we are not the terrorists.** The real terrorists are the capitalists and their government cronies like Blair and Bush. It is them, not us, who inflict misery and terror on the world.

The way to fight this is not by modifying our beliefs and toning down our actions, but by broadening our base of support in the working class. We must be louder than ever in our condemnation of capitalism.

How do we do this?

The anti-capitalist movement needs to get more involved in the campaigns of the working class, like anti-privatisation campaigns or the GMB's drive to organise McDonalds workers. We have to actively try to involve the unions in our campaigns too. Revolution has been doing this with the campaign against the use of sweat-shop labour by companies like Nike and GAP. We are getting support from major unions like the GMB.

The DSEi arms fair at Docklands in London on September 11 was a example of how not to build the anti-capitalist movement. The organisers of the demo didn't attempt to get support from the union movement and the local community. As a result, it ended up being a rather small demo which was outnumbered by the police, who harassed and tried to repress the demo all day.

The anarchist wing of the anti-capitalist movement refuse to work with the unions. They don't see the difference between sell-out union leaders and the rank and file of the unions who are ordinary working class people. To them the unions leaders are the union. This is a sectarian attitude. We think its OK to work with any union leader who is willing. It will get us wider support for what we are doing and help us spread anti-capitalist ideas even further. To use an old saying, we will work with the "devil and his grandmother" as long as we can agree on what action we want to do together.

The anti-capitalist movement must get involved in the growing fight against the war drive of Bush and Blair, and use it to widen its support.

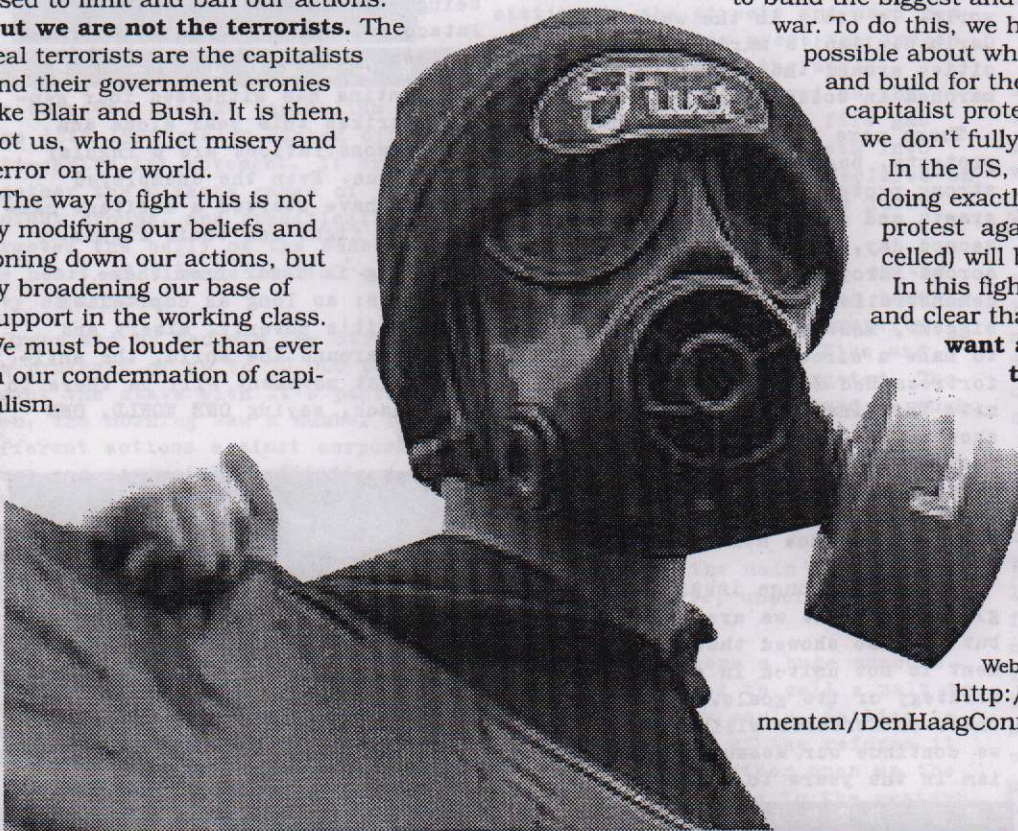
This is the biggest issue around at the moment. We need to build the biggest and widest opposition possible to the war. To do this, we have to agree with as many people as possible about what actions to take, and to just go out and build for them. We mustn't have separate anti-capitalist protests, or refuse to organise with those we don't fully agree with.

In the US, the anti-capitalist movement is doing exactly this. The planned Washington protest against the IMF meeting (now cancelled) will be turned into an anti-war protest.

In this fight against war we should be loud and clear that capitalism is the problem. **If we want a world free of bombings, war and terrorism, we need to get rid of capitalism.**

Thousands of ordinary people will be taking to the streets to protest against the bombing of Afghanistan and the war plans of Bush and Blair. We must be with them and use the opportunity to build the anti-capitalist movement.

Web site with details of conference in Holland:  
<http://www.burojansen.nl/documenten/DenHaagConferentie.htm>



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