

# THE HORRORS THAT COME FROM THIS HORRIBLE SYSTEM

September 11, 2001. USA. Shock. Mountains of steel and concrete falling, crushing. Loss. Lives shattered in a moment. Searching for loved ones buried under mountains of debris.

Horror from the sky.

A brown skinned woman stands at the Red Cross line holding a picture of her missing husband. Her eyes scan the scene as if looking hard will bring him back. A young blue-eyed man waits nervously for news of his lover. Hope turns to the realization that partners, friends and colleagues are gone. Snatched away by a conflict that has brutally intruded into daily life from the heavens.

In an instant New York City reminds us of Baghdad, Belgrade, Sudan, the West Bank, Vietnam, Panama, Indonesia, Hiroshima, Vieques.

The images flood our minds. Mothers running through the streets of Baghdad with their children as U.S. bombs fall like rain. Iraqi women watching their children die because U.S. bombs and sanctions have deliberately poisoned the water they need to live. Families carrying the coffins of sons taken out by made-in-U.S.A. rockets on the West Bank. Workers at a medicine factory picking through the rubble in Sudan left by U.S. cruise missiles. Scrambling for cover in Belgrade as U.S. bombs strike from the air. Looking through the stadium in Chile where thousands of former lovers, sons, and daughters lay—stilled forever by a coup made in Washington. Gasping with horror as the firing squads of the Indonesian army, with CIA lists of political opponents in their pockets, massacre hundreds of thousands, filling the rivers with the dead.

Hiroshima, Vietnam, Baghdad. The war has come home. Even if the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were symbols of the financial and military power of U.S. imperialism, the reality is that many innocent people were killed as a result.

And who is responsible? Who has put the masses in the U.S. in harms way?

The U.S. power structure points the finger to the Middle East. But the answer lies on U.S. soil. These imperialists—who have perpetrated countless crimes and rained havoc on the people of the world through their relentless global exploitation and their military actions—have created a situation where millions of



Looking for missing loved ones, New York City, September 13, 2001.



Baghdad, Iraq after U.S. bombing, 1991.



NATO air strikes, Yugoslavia, May 1999.



Palestinian boys, Israeli armored personnel carrier, Gaza Strip, September 14, 2001.

people all around the world hate the government of the United States.

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As the dust clears from our eyes, the people in the most powerful country in the world find ourselves held hostage to the inevitable repercussions of the actions of this U.S. power structure and their bloody military machine. Now, besides the horrors that they have perpetuated against the people around the world—horrors that multiply the tears shed in NY and Washington a thousand times—these cold-hearted imperialists have called forth the same kind of devastation in the belly of their own beast.

And now they call on the people to support their retribution. They speak of war and justice. No.

These hegemonic dominators do not have the right to continue on their warpath. They are the source of so much pain and suffering around the world. And their current moves to war and military actions—against named and unnamed countries and targets—must be actively opposed.

Through the shock we seek the truth: Global exploiters and mass murderers have no right to retribution and they can only bring more destruction and injustice. To join forces with them, to seek their protection, will only encourage them to commit more crimes against the people of our planet.

They show us pictures of Arab youth cheering in the streets of occupied territory and ask us to be horrified and seek revenge. But we need to ask *why* are people in the Middle East and other parts of the world celebrating the events of September 11: not because innocent lives were lost, but because an arrogant power that has been getting away with murder and boasting of its invincibility has been shown to be vulnerable.

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The rulers capitalize on our pain and ask the people to pray with them. But as the people remember our dead, what is the power structure doing? Unleashing more war and police state repression. Preying on the people of the world.

They talk of protecting the people but all the while they are drawing up lists of names, carrying out raids, and putting vast new Big Brother measures into place.

They talk of ending terror, through war, and ready their armed forces to bring about great horrors.

They want us to unite with them and wave their flag. No.

In the tension of the present, we remember the lessons of history. While they talk of another Pearl Harbor, we are reminded of how the U.S. government played on people's fear for their own safety to rally support for rounding up the Japanese-Americans, confiscating their property and putting them in concentration camps. We remember how they tried to paint anyone who opposed them as giving aid and comfort to the enemy.

And remembering these crimes strengthens our resolve to prevent such things from happening again. We cannot be intimidated by the official and unofficial pressure to line up behind their war moves and their flag. We can see the logic of this poison in the ugly threats and beatings coming down on Arab people.

As people mourn lost loved ones, as we put our arms around each other, all who seriously want justice need to reach out to the people of the world – to stand together against the crimes of this system, to strengthen our resistance against every act of war and repression.

And, as we build our resistance, we need to be crystal clear on the nature of these oppressors who are hurtling towards a new war: these arrogant lying creatures do not rule in the interests of the people of this country or the world. As long as they continue in power the horrors that come from their system will continue to rain from the sky.

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