

How Can We Create A World Safe From Terrorism?

Only global justice for all can create a safe and peaceful world.

The September 11th attacks and the murder of thousands of innocent people are all too vivid a display of the violent and unjust world in which we live. We condemn the attacks and demand that the perpetrators be brought to justice. **We all have the right to live in a world free of terrorism.** We believe it is possible to build such a world, but not by bombing and killing people in Afghanistan, or anywhere else. Rather, we need to look at the root causes of terrorism and change them.



Afghan refugee children

Let's look at the consequences of the U.S. led war. 3,767 civilians died during the first eight and a half weeks of the U.S. war on Afghanistan (according to a study by a professor at the University of New Hampshire). For example, U.S. warplanes killed at least 93 people when they strafed the farming village of Chowkar-Karez, 25 miles north of Kandahar on Oct. 23rd. A Pentagon official said, "the people there are dead because we wanted them dead." (Toronto Globe & Mail, 11/3/01). **Why? The Bush administration accepts these deaths because it does not consider the people of Afghanistan as important as the people of the United States.**

On Oct. 5th, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported that **40% of all Afghan children are malnourished.** Starvation threatens 3 to 4 million Afghans. On Sept. 16th, the New York Times reported that the U.S. demanded the elimination of truck convoys from Pakistan that provide much of the food and other supplies to Afghanistan's civilian population. The U.N. estimates that there are 3.5 million Afghan refugees.

Some people in this country believe that this is what Afghans deserve since the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were attacked. But revenge will not bring back those who died on Sept. 11th. We appeal to people's sense of humanity.

Causing more suffering in Afghanistan will only cause more hatred and distrust. The people of Afghanistan did not bomb the World Trade Center. **Instead of bombing we propose an international tribunal,** similar to the Nuremberg Tribunal after WWII which tried top level Nazis. Let's listen to the evidence and come to a just decision. This will help to establish a world in which nations work together to solve problems peacefully rather than resorting to war.

Will giving up our rights make us safer? Almost every day, Attorney General Ashcroft takes away more basic rights guaranteed by the Constitution. We don't agree that if you are a citizen then you have certain rights, and if you aren't a citizen you don't have any rights. These rights are to ensure that innocent people aren't falsely convicted of crimes. Everyone should have the right to a fair trial. No one should be arrested without probable cause. No one should be locked up for days or months without a right to see an attorney. The police and the F.B.I. shouldn't have the right to pick people up and hold them for days of questioning. **Right here in Chicago, we have seen that too often the police force confessions from innocent people.** The police use force -torture- to get innocent people to confess to crimes they didn't do. These same tactics applied to combat terrorism will not bring safety, but will lead to convictions of innocent people.

What can we do? We need to take action. Talk to friends, family and co-workers. Voice your opposition. Send letters to your newspaper. Join us to oppose the war and to build a just world.



Jalozai refugee camp, Pakistan

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