

## The Moment of Global Support

Two students from a local university stood near the Times Square in New York on a recent rainy day. Both were women in their early twenties, very white, very American. Each wore a poster that read 'We want peace, not war'. A television journalist from India, Ms. Barkha Dutt, approached them. The day before, another poll had confirmed that an overwhelming majority of Americans want quick military action. So, the journalist asked these students about the point of their vigil when they knew that they were in a hopeless minority. The women instantly replied that they had the support of the global community.

It is of utmost importance to examine the content of this global support and the moment which gave rise to it. In their youthful defiance of popular opinion, these women expressed an alternative whose understanding and dissemination may be the only real option left for the survival of the human race. There are reasons to believe that the moment may already be slipping away.

The post-War history of the world is such that it would not have been surprising at all if the rest of the world broke into frenzied celebrations of the massacre in America. Celebration of massacre is never a valid moral act. Yet, large masses of people can be driven to such moral failure when subjected to massive repression for decades by the perceived representatives of the victims of the massacre. To use Robert Fisk's oft-cited remark, such celebrations would have been another way in which 'a crushed, humiliated population' strikes back with 'wickedness and awesome cruelty'.

These humiliated populations, which by now cover most parts of the globe, do not need any authoritative documentation of the wickedness and awesome cruelty of the US-based military-industrial complex which has ruled the world for many decades. They have lived with it. From their habitat of rubbles, refugee camps, and other wastelands, it would have been perfectly easy for them to identify the whole of America and much of the Western world with the napalms that incinerate whole villages and the missiles that crash into hospitals. In fact, sections of American people have often been filmed as dancing in macabre glee as Vietnam and Iraq were subjected to saturation bombing. These were prominently displayed as patriotic acts as the rest of the world watched in horror.

Yet, somehow, the gruesome image of burning people jumping out of collapsing towers did not evoke similar reactions. Even those directly affected by US-sponsored terror just shook their heads in disbelief and grieved. During that moment of madness in America, the rest of the world embraced the common people of America as fellow victims of violence themselves. It was a spontaneous act of global dimensions prompted neither by instruction from above nor out of fear of reprisals. For once, this singular act in solidarity brought all the victims of the world together in silent condemnation of terrorism of all forms. There was no wide coverage of this act in America as the corporate media busied itself with hair-splitting calculations of strategies and costs. Yet from whatever little was aired, the message reached the two students in New York.

It is obvious that the message hasn't reached the leaders of the military-industrial complex. In fact, Washington and some of its allies in Europe have raised the only voice of terror since Black Tuesday. Yet again, an enemy has been identified and characterized as an evil and a scourge. The greatest military combine in the history of humanity has vowed to smoke out these faceless cowards and set them running until they are grabbed dead or

alive. The US will provide the list of whom it wants, and they have to be handed over. These conditions are non-negotiable, and any individual, group of people, or state that questions these conditions, say, by asking for evidence, will be treated as terrorists themselves. Those who submit are to be rewarded with money and military equipment even if they are known to be dictators and mass murderers. It is pronounced as a dirty, mean, long-drawn war that will be fought in the ravines and shadows. The humanity is required to stand by and watch in complete obedience. Nothing changes.

As weeks pass by and warships, planes, spies and troops are amassed on their soils, and as children and their destitute parents flee for food and safety, the grief that united humanity in that moment will turn into anger. When that anger turns into outright articulated hatred of the West once again, the terrorist's fervent prayers will be finally answered.

At the moment, the two students are standing between the terrorist and the counter-terrorist. There are scattered but hopeful reports of impressive campaigns for peace in some campuses. Thousands marched in Washinton on Saturday. There is then some attempt to stretch the moment. The doomed people are watching with hope. If the effort fails, they will finally snap off the link.

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