

Connecting the Dots: 9–11 ... War ... Globalisation

In the wake of the tragic events of September 11, with the mobilization of the largest display of military might since the Second World War, the United States has embarked upon a military adventure which threatens the very future of humanity.

Casually presented to the public as a “campaign against international terrorism”, the deployment of America’s war machine purports to enlarge America’s sphere of influence not only in Central Asia and the Middle East, but also into the Indian sub-continent and the Far East.

The U.S. has established a permanent military presence in Afghanistan, which occupies a strategic position bordering on the former Soviet Union, China and Iran. Afghanistan is also at the hub of five nuclear powers: Russia, China, India, Pakistan and Kazakhstan. (See map on page 21.)

Economic Depression

The onslaught of this war is occurring at the height of a global economic depression. This is marked by the downfall of state institutions, increasing debt, mounting unemployment, the collapse in living standards in all major regions of the World and the outbreak of famines throughout the Third World.

This depression is far more serious than that of the 1930s because in the new era of *globalisation* regional depressions are no longer self-contained. Moreover, the war has not only unleashed a massive shift out of civilian economic activities into the military-industrial complex, it has also accelerated the demise of the welfare state in most Western countries.

War and globalisation are intimately related. The global economic crisis, which preceded the events of September 11 has its roots in the New World Order “free market reforms”. Since the 1997 Asian economic crisis, financial markets have plummeted, national economies have collapsed one after the other, and entire countries (like Argentina and Turkey) have been taken over by their international creditors, forcing millions of people into abysmal poverty.

Demise of Western Social Democracy

“The post-September 11 crisis” is being used to announce the end of an era, that is, the demise of Western social democracy. The legitimacy of the “global free market system” is reinforced, opening the door to a renewed wave of deregulation and privatisation, resulting in corporate take-overs of most, if not all, public services and state infrastructure (including health care, electricity, water and transportation). Since September 11, state resources have been redirected towards financing the military-industrial complex and beefing up domestic security at the expense of much needed social programs which have been slashed to the bone.

Moreover, in the US, Great Britain and most countries of the European Union, the legal fabric of society is being overhauled. Based on the repeal of the Rule of Law, the foundations of an authoritarian state apparatus have emerged with little or no organised opposition from the mainstay of civil society. Without debate or discussion, “the war on terrorism” is declared necessary to protect democracy and enhance domestic security, but it is enacted by stripping citizens of their hard won civil liberties. (See pages 28 to 38.)

America’s “War on Terrorism”

Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda network constitute the sole justification for waging this war. They have been used by the Bush Administration not only to justify the extensive bombing of civilian targets in Afghanistan, but also to redefine the very nature of democracy itself.

The new “anti-terrorist legislation” is designed to uphold the free market system against its own citizens. One of its main purposes is to disarm the civil rights and anti-war coalitions, as well as curb the development of any meaningful “anti-globalisation” movement.

Presented in a stylised fashion by the Western media, Osama bin Laden constitutes the new bogeyman. He is both the ‘cause’ and the ‘consequence’ of war and social devastation. He is also being held responsible for all the civilian casualties in Afghanistan.

What the mainstream media rarely mentions is that Osama bin Laden’s Al Qaeda network was an “intelligence asset” trained and equipped by the CIA. (See page 16.) Successive U.S. governments have used Al Qaeda and other international terrorist networks in the pursuit of their foreign policy objectives. (See page 25.)

Oil Pipelines

Afghanistan has been transformed into a U.S. protectorate. U.S. troops are now stationed in several former Soviet republics including Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

The hidden agenda is oil. The interim government in Kabul is headed by Hamid Karzai, a former consultant to UNOCAL Corporation. In turn, Washington’s special envoy to Afghanistan is Zalmay Khalizad, another former UNOCAL official, who helped draw up the plans for the original trans-Afghan pipeline which had been negotiated with the Taliban government.

The Bush Administration held a series of negotiations with the Taliban government in early 2001 regarding the UNOCAL trans-Afghan pipeline. “At one moment during one of the negotiations, U.S. representatives told the Taliban, ‘either you accept our offer of a carpet of gold, or we bury you under a carpet of bombs.’” (See page 70.)