

# Doing justice for the victims of July 7th: rejecting the politics of fear

On 7th July 2005 a group of people with no regard for the rule of law or the human rights of others indiscriminately slaughtered over 50 innocent civilians and injured hundreds more in the terrorist attacks in London. The horror and anger that we feel is the horror and anger that the Iraqi people experience every day as a result of the invasion of their country by US and British forces in 2003. Their grief has been no less than our grief, their anger no less than ours, but the blood letting has been immeasurably worse. The destruction wrought by the war has claimed 100,000 lives since Iraq was invaded.

The war has transformed Iraq from a brutal dictatorship into a hotbed of international terrorism. The transition to democracy, accompanied by abysmal living standards, is being enforced by lawlessness and brutality by the occupiers, in Abu Ghraib or Camp Bread Basket. There are 10,000 held in similar conditions by either the Iraqi or occupying forces. The impact of such violations of the rule of law won't go unnoticed by those who will use it to recruit for their battle against state terror.

It would be wrong, however, to simply claim that 7th July was 'payback' for the illegal occupation of Iraq. No, the suffering of the Iraqi people is the most recent, and deadly, attack upon oppressed peoples who share the Muslim faith. The root causes of 7th July attacks were also the first Gulf War and the sanctions that killed a million children over the following decade, retaliation for the suffering of the Palestinians, Chechens, Afghanis and many more including the 8,000 Muslim men and boys slaughtered in Srebrenica by the Serbian army in July 1995 while the UN stood by and watched. To the terrorist there is a war against the Muslim people of the world, led by Israel and the US and supported by Britain. Tragically the suffering of millions of Muslims everywhere feeds this fear and loathing. The perpetual 'War on Terror' rather than bringing about the end of terror, continues to reap more war and more terror. It is a vicious circle. But it seems that only the innocent are its victims. The guilty are absolved. On 5th May, a British Government which had lied about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and misled the country into war was rewarded and Tony Blair was re-elected. The people of London were rewarded with 7th July attacks.

The attacks were timed to coincide with the G8 summit at Gleneagles. Here the leaders of the world's richest countries were meeting once again as an unelected, unaccountable club to determine the future for the world's poorest countries. The outcome of deals on debt, aid and trade was a dismal disappointment reinforcing all the damaging and undemocratic conditions attached to debt relief in the past and failing to address the debts of some of the most needy countries. The G8 drew the attention of the world once more to the fact that the foreign policies of the richest countries continue to be determined by their own economic interests not those of the poorest nations. The end result is mass poverty for tens of millions, and while poverty itself does not create terrorists, it certainly creates the conditions for terrorism.

Nearly 4 years on from September 11th, we have an opportunity to reject the politics of fear. All of the perpetrators of violence must be held accountable. If the attacks in London enable Tony Blair and likeminded politicians to duck their responsibility for what has happened, or use it to justify measures at home and abroad which violate the rule of law or human rights, then the cycle of violence will not only continue but escalate.

A true legacy for those who died and continue to suffer as a result of the attacks on 7th July is not only to bring those responsible to justice but also to change the climate of fear and hatred which made it inevitable in the first place.

We must begin first by holding our own leaders to account and undertaking an unflinching defence of human rights. Those responsible for national security had no idea that the attacks were being planned or who is responsible. This is despite anti-terrorist laws which now allow for the use of evidence obtained through torture and for both British and foreign nationals to be kept under house arrest. Our security services have been diverted into false lines of enquiry and therefore away from those who pose a real threat to our lives and communities. The answer is not to compound the mistakes we have already made. There is only a political solution to the problems we face and the opposition to laws, alliances and actions which perpetuate injustice and foster terror needs to be harnessed into a coherent political force.

Peace and Progress was founded as a political party in November 2004 to defend and promote human rights. Now more than ever we need a voice in the political arena which unites all the opposition to the direction in which our leaders are taking us. We invite you to join us and to work actively for a world which rejects the politics of fear.

For more information, email us at [info@peaceandprogress.org](mailto:info@peaceandprogress.org)

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