

One year ago, 2,998 lives were taken by extremists with no regard for human life or liberty.

**A**nd in the months since, we survivors have seen our lives taken too, piece by piece. A nation of millions, held hostage by terrorists! We look on in horror as they send Anthrax through our mail, tap our phones, fill our airports with armed gunmen, spread invisible webs of informers throughout our ranks.

No one knows where it will stop. The War on Terrorism is turning out to be as effective as the War on Drugs: it may not do much against terrorism, but it sure does a lot for war.

And you know where terrorists come from, don't you? They are the orphaned children who grow up where the last generation's bombs fell. Terrorism is the small-town startup company, war the multinational franchise that puts it out of business—but depends on others coming along to keep the market fresh and maintain the illusion of competition.

"Either you're with us, or you're against us." So speak both the terrorists and the ministers of war. They need each other, rely on each other to complete the protection racket; that's why the C.I.A. funds and trains and provokes the terrorists, and the terrorists aim for *us*, not the government whose haphazard bombings and self-serving policies maintain their bases of support. Without each other, neither would have a way to justify their existence.

But as the initial wave of hysteria wears off, many of us are questioning whether we *are* with them. How many of us voted for our current commander-in-chief—not many, with millions in prison unable to participate, millions more abstaining, and the other candidates receiving a majority of the votes counted! If we set out to address the tragedies of this world ourselves, employing compassion and engagement instead of bombs, where would the support come from to keep the terrorists armed and housed? Taking matters into our own hands, we could put the warlords and terrorists out of business at once, and save all our lives in the process—something no amount of force can do for us.



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[www.indymedia.org/peace](http://www.indymedia.org/peace)  
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*By the end of December 2001, civilian casualties in Afghanistan far exceeded casualties in Manhattan on September 11 [BBC News, January 3, 2002], while Osama bin Laden remained at large—as he still does. One can be sure that every relative, friend, and neighbor of the Afghan innocent dead is now more sympathetic to the terrorists, rather than less.*

When will it end?