



The BLACK TUESDAY of 2001 - Part 1

September 11, 2001:

The tragic event on that date is beyond words, except: NO MORE!

The concern of people worldwide should make us question how the reckless spiral of brutality can be brought to a halt. One thing is certain: the force of arms cannot solve the conflict. On the contrary, it may prolong it and even make it worse. This does not mean that the search for and the punishment of the perpetrators of this despicable act of terror should not be carried out. This is a call to action for peace activists worldwide. After "Black Tuesday" one can only hope that the United States and their allies will not resort to any ill-considered course of action which may be detrimental to peace-making over the long term.

Feelings of anger and hatred after this criminal strike are understandable. However, they may impede a sober assessment perpetrator's motivations and the cause of the catastrophe. Thinking in "black" and "white" may obscure one's horizon. The world is then thoughtlessly divided in "GOOD" and "BAD". To generalize and describe whole entities as "the good ones" or "the bad ones" is questionable. Entire countries or religions cannot be so easily categorized.

Surprisingly, I never heard the question "Why?" following this act of terror. Indeed, why would America become the image of evil in the Islamic world? How could the teachings of Islam become so misconceived? How can this be rectified? These questions lead us away from purely militaristic thinking, and directly into the field of peace education.

Professor Solterer of Georgetown University once said, "From my own personal experience I know what nonsensical opinions one can form about others, if one does not know them personally." Most of us have experienced this. That is why it would be profitable to work on the creation of international schools which promote dialogue between young people. But to really get to know one another requires extended companionship. This could be achieved by bringing together international communities dedicated to pursuing similar peaceful goals. I realize how easy it is to classify "Friends of Peace" as dreamers and Utopists, and we don't have much leverage. But by increasing our numbers we still may prevail.