Correspondence on "Anti-Americanism: The ‘anti-imperialism’ of fools"

3 October 2001

*The following are some of the letters we received on the September 22 article "*Anti-Americanism: The ‘anti-imperialism’ of fools*."*

To the editor of the *WSWS*:

Praise be to you David North and David Walsh. A very deep true history of American life and social functions as it was and is today. Too bad the big newspapers are afraid to publish such a fine and accurate article. Thanks

JO

22 September 2001

Dear Editors,

This was a timely article, indeed. Permit me to add one aspect: the limited world view of nationalism and the relationship of petty-bourgeois radicals to the nation-state. Nationalists are incapable of differentiating between the antagonistic elements within a class society such as that in the USA. To them, it’s just “the Americans” or “America.” At its most horrific, this attitude is present in the recent terrorist attacks in that, for their perpetrators, these attacks were a blow against the imperialist “Satan America,” rather than the mass murder of thousands of working people. Equally, middle-class “radicals” such as Raven, caught up as they are in a backward mindset that invokes the mirage of a return to a somehow sanitized nation-state as the solution to all problems, have nothing to offer but illusions, cynicism or nationalist-tainted prejudices. One way or another, these are positions that offer no way forward. They are intrinsically reactionary.

RS

22 September 2001

Dear David and David,

Thank you for writing this beautifully insightful article. In one writing you have put so many important ideas in a clear, accessible format. I know quite a few people, myself included, who feel torn between pride in their country for its humanist accomplishments and the revulsion they feel towards the militaristic, antidemocratic policies of the ruling elite—carried out in the name of those ideals. I plan to share this with as many people as I can.

Sincerely,

PW

22 September 2001

Dear World Socialists,

Please, please. I am not allowed to be a socialist if I think the damage to the United States was (relatively) minor? Every year there are 42,000 people dead in fatal traffic crashes in the United States. Seven times the damage now! It is not a bloody nose, but it isn’t a definitive catastrophe neither. The United States should sit down, get calm and think about it.

Take care of the victims, repair the damage, take reasonable measures like better airplanes (not able to fly into an object), better safety regulations, a social program to prevent extremist groups to flourish. You say the society of the US of America “always fascinates.” Well, to me, things are not fascinating anymore. Not even the comments by the World Socialists.

FP

Netherlands

22 September 2001

Dear Editor,

I have read the article by Charlotte Raven, which was reproduced in the South African *Mail & Guardian.* You are quite correct—it is an offensive piece of reactionary drivel. The fact that she conflates the American people with the American ruling class exposes her abysmal ignorance of American history and complete absence of class consciousness. Her sneering and callous comments about the September 11 catastrophe speaks to a deep contempt for ordinary people.

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Demonstrating solidarity with the American people in no way implies support for the Bush administration's war measures.

Yours,

EG

South Africa

22 September 2001

Dear Sirs:

As an American, I must protest one sentence in an otherwise excellent essay, "Anti-Americanism: the 'anti-imperialism' of fools", to wit: "There are, after all, two Americas, the America of Bush, Clinton and the other scoundrels, and another America, of its working people."

I do not know where the authors of this article live, but if they live in the United States, it could hardly have escaped their notice that the America of Bush, Inc. persecuted and harassed Bill Clinton for his entire presidency, spending millions on an insane attempt to impeach him for his sex life, and that this attempt failed because the other America, "of its working people," refused to support the impeachment, and in fact turned many of the Republican Congressional leaders out of office in 1998 because of it. To lump Bill Clinton in with Bush, et al, is not only to ignore the facts, it amounts to a commission of the same sin for which the authors rightly castigate Charlotte Raven.

There were leftists in this country, such as Christopher Hitchens, who cynically joined in the Clinton witch-hunt ... while taking not one iota of time to examine the motivations of those behind this appalling spectacle. Indeed, Hitchens now regularly appears at right-wing seminars and lectures to deliver his homilies on Clinton's failings as a man and as a president.

Did Bill Clinton make mistakes as president? Yes. Were some of his policies questionable, or even wrong, from a leftist and humanitarian perspective? Certainly. But as an American, and a leftist, I am here to tell you that I miss his presence now more than ever, and that I would rather have him in charge right now than Baby Bush and his gang of corporate raiders. If you happened to see or read the news accounts of Bill Clinton's visit to ground zero in New York on Thursday, September 13, two days after the attack, you would have seen how that other America, the America you praise, felt about this man. To equate him with Bush, Inc. is to insult those people with whom you claim solidarity.

AD

Philadelphia

22 September 2001

Dear sirs:

Thanks for this excellent piece. It makes me feel better about *WSWS*.

BC

Keaau, Hawaii

23 September 2001

Dear Editors,

A very timely and wonderful article, by David North and David Walsh "Anti Americanism: The 'anti-imperialism' of fools." There can be no doubt that the most important theoretical breakthrough in Marxist political economy since Trotsky has been the analysis of the breakup of the postwar boom and in particular the collapse of the Bretton Woods system of national regulations. It is one thing to know about the law of the tendency, of the general rate of profit to decline, but only the Trotskyist movement was capable of expressing this process in terms of contemporary political economy. It is this very process that will take care of the Charlotte Ravens of this world—one way or another.

There is no doubt that "The American population, polyglot and highly diverse, is obsessed with ideological problems, although its approach is often maddeningly pragmatic." One can only imagine, the literary, intellectual, and artistic giants, that this largely ill-directed obsession will produce, when finally the shattering of illusions produces a turn to Marxism for the ideologically obsessed American. A very thought provoking article. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

AC

Australia

24 September 2001

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