Letters on the US war in Afghanistan

9 November 2001

Below we post a selection of recent letters to the WSWS *on the US war in Afghanistan.*

To the Editors, *WSWS*,

Your coverage on the role of a fawning bourgeois press, and in particular, the "newspaper of record", the *New York Times*, underscores what all of us have been saying about state terrorism in the United States. We're all supposed to be cowering under our beds at the whim of these fools, and we're all supposed to feel more secure with the homegrown mediated terror, say it, terror, generated by our government and its compliant intelligentsia. I'm not frightened, I'm disgusted.

No one in authority in this country has expected the slightest accountability from these jerks. The irony is breathtaking. I mean, here I am, a certified public school teacher, busting my butt to make sure my students stand accountable for their behavior. I am expected to answer every sort of question, fill out reams of paperwork, be fingerprinted and security checked countless times, in order to attain or maintain competency.

Meanwhile, here are all these born again war criminals, armed to the teeth with thermonuclear weapons, many of whom can barely frame a coherent phrase in English, refusing to answer any probing questions about their psychopathic behavior and their pathological lying. Is there something wrong with this picture?

Naturally, I'd like to live a long life, free from threats to my liberties, just like everyone else in this country. But we'd all better wake up and recognize in a serious way that the enemy is here at home. The future is with the proletariat, or there is no future.

MP

8 November 2001

There have been two known offers by the Taliban to negotiate turning over bin Laden for judicial judgment. The first offer was rejected automatically by Bush. Concerning the second offer, we have heard no reply. The US news media is unreliable and basically dishonest but we have so far heard that these two offers have not been accepted. It appears the US does not want to get bin Laden but only wreak revenge and misery on a helpless population that are not terrorists. The claim that the civilian casualties were "an accident" simply is not defensible—they are the targets—this is the war of terror against terror. It is modeled on the NATO attack against Yugoslavia, which the pro-war enthusiasts consider to be a complete success.

Some pro-war types could argue that the Taliban offer is not sincere but that could only be determined through negotiations, where the US could "call their bluff." But they won't even talk. Others might say that the Taliban terms are unacceptable insofar as they want to turn bin Laden over to a third party. But is this not open to negotiations, to discussion, to bargaining? The US won't talk but prefers to bomb, destroy, maim, kill and terrorize.

The Taliban made a reasonable offer, which could be open to bargaining or compromise but the US is steadfast: no compromise, only unconditional surrender. If the US has to obliterate half of Afghanistan, what do they care? However, there may be others who do.

LR

8 November 2001

As a former soldier in the US Army, and since then a long-time employee of the Army, I've known many people over the years that fought in America's wars, particularly in Vietnam. I do not consider them part of any "ruling elite" or its unwitting minions. Thanks to the financial assistance of the "imperialist government" of the US, I graduated summa cum laude from a state university with a degree in journalism and joined that "debased" profession that so ill serves the American public, according to your perspective.

From the socialist world view, all of us who are part of the "military industrial complex" are apparently helping to achieve the objectives of a governmental/corporate elite that wants to shape a new world order that serves its interests—and the impoverished masses be damned. It must be reassuring indeed to have such a firmly held, black-and-white view of how the world operates.

Many of the rest of us are caught in a kind of middle zone that is comprised of varying shades of gray. We believe there is some truth to what our government leaders say, some truth to what people in the Arab world are saying and some middle ground that is probably closer to the truth—which perhaps neither side is willing to reach in the current climate of anger and fear. That will become more apparent with time, as it has with respect to past wars, and the American press will be among those who point it out, as they have in the past.

In the wake of September 11, I'm working with my other colleagues in the Army to ensure that military campaigns in Afghanistan and elsewhere are a complete success (if that is in fact possible). Afterward we can take the time to reflect upon America's foreign policy mistakes of the past.

MC

8 November 2001

The management of CNN must think that the American people never watch the BBC or Deutsche Welle or ITN or read any newspapers other than *USA Today*! Anyone who does any or all of these things knows that American news reporting is a joke (and not a very funny one, at that). Remember that American news reports didn't mention any of the anti-war demonstrations around the country and the world until they realized that BBC news had done a major segment on it and that Deutsche Welle had also. So

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suddenly they did a (very) brief mention of the demonstrations (albeit still implying that the demonstrators were a minority of weirdoes and hinting that they were also un-American).

On the other hand, there are a great many American people who have no source of news other than television, and seldom watch that! Therefore, I encourage anyone who has good sources of news to drop copies of foreign newspapers on the doorsteps of their ignorant neighbors as a public service. Remember consciousness raising?

CZ

San Francisco

7 November 2001

Thanks to Patrick Martin for yet more much needed dismantlement of the US propaganda machine ["CNN tells reporters: no propaganda, except American"]. I'm sure you are also aware that the US Defense Dept. has hired one of the largest public relations firm in the US, the Rendon Group, to do PR for them. I can only wonder who came up with such insidious PR moves as the dollars for Afghan Children campaign, which has millions of American children emptying their piggybanks and washing cars to send money to the Bush administration with absolutely no oversight or regulation. Or better yet, Bush's new "pen pal initiative," which will pair US school kids with Muslims in a written exchange. The State Dept. has also jumped on the bandwagon, contracting with the AdCouncil to create one of the more frightening pieces of propaganda I've ever seen, the "I Am an American" ad, which endeavors to sell Americans their own country. Frightening.

NC

Montreal

6 November 2001

Thank you for your article on the role of the media. I just wish the truth could reach a wider audience, like myself who have been kept in the dark while a powerful plan and plot to achieve their desired aims and goals has been launched.

Thank you once again.

ZB

6 November 2001

Your 14 September 2001 editorial ["Why the Bush administration wants war"] says in words what has been in my mind for years—i.e., US is looking for an excuse to dominate the Middle East. Until this moment, I have been lonely and isolated amongst the flag wavers and the singers of God Bless America; now I know I am not isolated.

Think what this country could do if the military spending of these past seven weeks were used to support the lives of average US residents? That is the tragedy.

SB

7 November 2001

Thank you for a very comprehensive and factual piece. ["Green Party opponent of Afghan war detained at US airport"]. I believe Ms. Oden is the "canary in the coal mine" and we must strongly spread the word about this far and wide. I wonder how often it's happening all across the country?

BS

7 November 2001

Hello, I don't know how you guys dig up this stuff, but it is great that there is somebody flushing out these "McCarthyism" stories. Not a good time for freedom. GH

6 November 2001

Dear Peter Symonds,

I've read your article, "The Taliban, The USA and the resources of Central Asia," on the *WSWS* and I was deeply impressed. I'm a Brazilian History teacher and my students are very much interested to have reliable information on Afghanistan and the real causes of this stupid war. You were very didactical and comprehensive.

Best regards,

MM

6 November 2001

Dear editor,

Thank you for a particularly fine article on the relationship between the US and Canada. By pointing to the fact that what is taking place now has actually been long in the making, you dispel the clouds of obfuscatory nationalist rhetoric. This article is a clear demonstration of the superiority of the Marxist method over other forms of analysis.

Yours

EG

6 November 2001

Since I came across your site several weeks ago, I have become a devoted reader and rely on *WSWS* for complete and accurate information. I thank you and have forwarded many of your messages to friends.

I am anxious to get the complete dope on the financial connections linking the Carlyle Merchant Bank, the bin Laden family and the Bush family. It sounds like treason to me or at least war profiteering, a contemptible, disloyal use of power and privilege.

MS

New Mexico

5 November 2001

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