

Letters to the WSWS

29 March 2002

Below we post a selection of recent letters to the WSWS.

[On “Amnesty International report condemns US treatment of immigrant detainees”]

Thank you for your article.

One quote really struck a chord in me.

“I have now been in solitary confinement for 3½ months and at the time of my next hearing I will have been here for four months.... Why am I imprisoned? Why in solitary confinement? And why under maximum security measures? I have many questions and no answers.... What are they accusing me of? Nobody knows.”

This sounds like a quote that should be coming from a Kafka novel and NOT a prisoner of a nation based on liberty and justice for all.

Sincerely,

VM

26 March 2002

[On “Victim of anti-Clinton witch-hunt denounces independent counsel’s report on Lewinsky affair—An open letter from Julie Hiatt Steele”]

I happened upon your web site while reading some remarks in a chat room. I read all of your columns about Julie Hiatt Steele and they were superb; I have put you on my favorite sites.

Thank you,

BS

Texas

25 March 2002

WSWS,

Thank you for exposing the details of the despicable treatment of Julie Hiatt Steele, during the Clinton/Lewinsky trials. It was an echo of the HUAC witch-hunts in the late forties and early fifties, during which innocent lives were ruined. The whole system is built up of lies. Congratulations on your excellent articles.

CB

25 March 2002

[On “Hollywood’s ideological war—Two films: *Collateral Damage* and *We Were Soldiers*”]

To the Editors, WSWS:

The *Wall Street Journal* review of *We Were Soldiers* is reprehensible, to say the very least. My father served in Vietnam from January of 1968 to August of 1969. My cousin did three tours of duty. And the idea that families, as a rule, calmly accepted the death of family members in that conflict is beyond the beyond. Kids who lived in my neighborhood learned pretty fast that a Special Services car pulling up in front of your quarters was not necessarily something you wanted to see, because quite often it meant the injury or death of a family member.

We who had fathers or cousins stationed overseas during the war can remember many evenings, scanning the news, hoping for a quick glance of people we were close to, yet knowing we wouldn’t see them. We were unable at some level to comprehend what it meant that

half a million of our people had been sent overseas to do this strange, inexplicable work. The immensity of US involvement and the open-endedness of the war were the real discussions on most lips. It seemed to go on, and on, and on.

I still have a small box of letters my pops sent to my mother, my sisters and I, some of which were written at the height of the Tet Offensive, others when the “fun and games,” as dad called it, had subsided around where he was stationed in Long Binh. The tone of the letters, poignant, puzzled expressions from a man who had given his life to the US military, perplexed by the irony of creditors who were harassing my mother here stateside when she couldn’t meet living expenses on a non-com’s pay, creditors never too busy to write letters to my father’s commanding officers demanding payment.

There are some of us who remember the war, some of us who these fat cat bastards will never convince the war was anything other than what it was: a series of war crimes visited upon the civilian population of Southeast Asia, paid for by the civilian population of the United States, and fought, as always, by workers in uniform. Many of whom, by the way, never saw any justice for the chemical defoliants poured into their systems by the Dow Chemical Company, Agents Orange and White. My cousin was among those who were so burned by those who “support our troops” one year, and then hang them out to dry every year after that.

So let Hollywood chat away, make their fairytale movies. It will not play out. Those of us who remember what the Vietnam War was will be out here, keeping the Vietnam Syndrome alive and well, with as much time and energy as it takes until the day when the only real battle that matters takes this country away from the corporate Nazis who are currently running it into the ground.

MP

24 March 2002

[On “Tolkien and the flight from modern life—*The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, directed by Peter Jackson”]

Dear editor,

Thank you so much for the sensitive and insightful articles on *The Lord of the Rings*. As a youngster I initially read *The Hobbit* and then went on to read the trilogy, followed by the *Silmarillion*. Over the years I returned to these books. However, immersion in Tolkein’s world has always been accompanied by a profound sense of unease. The quote from Marx regarding the difficulties, or rather, the impossibility of creating mythologies in the modern era succinctly and brilliantly explains the reason for this discontent.

The background to the making of the film, and especially the analysis of the economics thereof, is a necessary corrective to the multitude of vacuous endorsements of the film’s technical brilliance whereby art is emptied of content and reduced to technique. It is striking that the producers of a film which yearns for bygone eras, have treated the many “extras” and labourers employed in the making of the film in a manner reminiscent of medieval barons.

Yours,
EG
22 March 2002

Thanks for this review of *The Lord of the Rings*. Typical of your publication, the writing reveals scholarship and intelligence. It is informative in its own right even if I never see this movie.

RR
21 March 2002

[On "Furor over visas for 911 hijackers—Bush sacks immigration officials: Who is accountable, and who is not"]

Dear Editor:

All I have to say about your recent article is that it's about time. To date, no American news journal or televised media program has once "connected the dots" between the granting of visas to "alleged" hijackers on 9-11 and the Bush administration's halting of continual investigations into terrorism in the United States; specifically that of Al Qaeda.

As not only your reporting but much of the European press has also demonstrated, the Bush administration is compartmentalizing activities into segregated areas whereby no connections are sought nor discussion allowed. In their inherent fantasy to demonize any investigation or out-right discussion concerning the activities that led up to 9-11 and thereafter, the Bush administration is developing the seeds for a dictatorial form of government that few Americans can understand with the exception of those who follow such events.

Just recently, the Ashcroft Justice Department was reducing the capabilities of the Civil Rights division while requesting increased powers over the INS agency to discipline errant officials. And yet the Democrats remain complacent while the honest Republicans remain silent. All the while, the reactionary right wing in America are sharpening their knives.

Unfortunately for the world, the American citizenry for the most part is a "nation of sheep" that is simply being herded wherever their inherent "machismo" leads them. It is unfortunate that so few Americans are seemingly speaking out against such events while those that are, are being left to be viewed as unpatriotic at best or troublesome at worst.

One would think that if Americans really did hold such ideals as those that were the basis for this nation, as so cherished, there would be a far greater response to such activity ... yet there isn't.

With all respect,
SN

19 March 2002

Dear Mr. Martin,

Thanks for your informative article. The impression I get is that these fired immigration officials are merely fall guys who had to take the blame for actions omitted or even committed at higher policymaking levels.

But what strikes me as particularly unfair is that Mr. Ashcroft is trying to encroach on the Terminator's domain by his insistence on being given, if I may use your quote: "the authority to quickly discipline or terminate individuals for acts of negligence..." Or is he just trying to compete with his boss in the contest for the funniest distortion of the English language?

Your faithful reader,
RT

19 March 2002

PS: Why do we hear so little about the Enron affair, which is so relevant to the present administration and its shenanigans? Why do we

not hear or read anything about the flight recorders on those four misguided planes? The American people used to pride themselves about their right to know. These are issues that have an immediate and long-term bearing on their lives. Why is there this deafening silence?

Hi there,

I think that what you have written in your articles is a serious matter. Being European it puts me in a position to observe the US and US politics from an outsider's perspective. It pleases me to see that there actually are people in the US who think like normal human beings should. But one of the questions that come to mind is: what's wrong with the American people? Don't they see what's going on? We Europeans, or at least non-right-wing thinkers, saw this coming for a long time.

By the looks of things you are going to be a police state soon. Germany in World War II is close to comparison, from Gestapo tactics, extreme-right ways of thinking and imperialism in general. I hope you can reach more people in your struggle because what the world doesn't need right now is Bush and his IQ of 5 to tell the world what to do.

Thanks for having an alternative view of things.

SW

Belgium

25 March 2002

Thank you for your newsletters. Like most Americans, I was conditioned all of my life to think socialism/communism/Marx should be equated with only evil. Now I know where my intellectual home is. Your site makes more sense than CNN's lies every day of the week.

DH

22 March 2002

Dear WWS;

Your incisive analysis of events in the past six months, most especially the events of September 11, the reaction thereafter from the American political establishment, and refugee vilification in Australia, deserve great praise. The positions of the WWS now, though they may be dismissed as balderdash by your political opponents today, will be common sense for future generations. This is because the WWS is the voice of historical objective truth, with no ethnic, national, or religious standpoint.

IP

Canada

28 March 2002

P.S. It seems to me very interesting that the attacks of September 11 have now been abbreviated in the mainstream media as simply 9/11. Considering the horror of these attacks, it seems unbelievably crass. Imagine (to use a grossly disproportionate example, mind you) the Nazi Holocaust being referred to as the "H". I have thought this through, and it appears to be a simple matter of efficacy. The events of September 11 have been used to justify and excuse so much, that the media simply needs a buzzword in order that it does not irritate the general population with constant references to "The Terror Attacks of September 11." If they plan to refer to the latter constantly and for a long period of time, why not use shorthand? How very depraved!



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