

Letters on US militarism

27 March 2002

Below we post a selection of recent letters to the WSWs on US militarism.

Dear David Walsh,

I really appreciated your article about the Bush administration and the Walker case. This whole case really angers me. I mean there is no way, on God's green earth, he will get a fair trial. The government had no case, so they probably lied to Walker about the lawyer his parents had for him or his Miranda rights to get him to talk. He had to tell them everything or they tormented him until he said what they wanted to hear (which is exactly where they get their case), and then Ashcroft goes and tells the press that Walker is a traitor and that, alone, angers me and everyone.

Everyone, from illegal immigrants to lawyers, believes he is a traitor. To me, we're a bunch of robots and our owner is the government and the biased media. The media did not say anything about Ashcroft's comments about Walker, which broke the rules or guidelines, nor did Ashcroft get in trouble. They are telling us, and we are repeating it, *and we believe it!* It's like we are all being infested by evil little worms crawling into our brains and doing exactly what it tells us to do. I thought people were smarter than this! And there is no real factual information to prove John Walker is a traitor. Isn't everyone innocent until proven guilty? Then why has Walker received the name "traitor"? I'm trying to stay cool and optimistic about the whole thing! How can Ashcroft and the Bush administration sleep like babies at night? When his trial rolls around—and I see his probably unfair trial (which better be on Court TV!)—and it's obvious, people who believe the same way I do will have a march on Washington!

SS

(14 years old)

Maryland

12 March 2002

I just wanted to say thank you. I anxiously await the daily news reported on the WSWs. Where would the truth and reality be otherwise?

JF

13 March 2002

Dear Mr. Grey:

Well, you've certainly scared me. And I must probably commend that old reprobate, William Safire, on his perspicacity in asking the right questions about the Air Force One telephone call. Of course, he never received an answer and the story disappeared along with many others.

The text of your lecture should properly be on the front pages of every newspaper in the country; it should be given to all American history and civics classes in schools across the nation. It will certainly add more interest to those studying the subject of who runs the country when the president dies or is incapacitated; or the history of World War II or the CIA.

All of the points you have mentioned—the Bush family's long relationship with the bin Laden family, the Moussaoui business, the Atta question, the anthrax, etc.—"somehow" either never make the mainstream news or are presented out of context and in such censored form that they become meaningless and are subsequently forgotten.

As was once said by a famous British military man after viewing the arms and armor on display in the Tower of London (and here I paraphrase

somewhat): "I don't know whether they frighten our enemies, but, by God, they frighten me!"

Well done.

CZ

San Francisco

12 March 2002

Congrats on your two-part series on the war in Afghanistan. I don't always agree with everything you write, but overall, I think you guys deliver great information in a concise and very readable format.

One comment on the articles: while I agree with your comments about Clinton and the effort of the right wing to impeach him, he was extremely reactionary in his own right. Under his presidency, we bombed Iraq some more, destroyed Yugoslavia and bombed Sudan.

The outlook for things is terrible. I for one think we are headed for more repression and a nuclear war. I don't think there is any political or economic understanding of what is going on, especially in the US. I have watched Vietnam, Nicaragua, Panama, Iraq, Yugoslavia and now Afghanistan being bombed. I expect more of the same.

Thanks for your efforts.

PB

Pennsylvania

12 March 2002

Dear Sir:

How right you are about the Bush regime actions after 9-11. I have always said it was preplanned, probably not the bombing, but they have made so many countries mad at the way they were trying to control the world they were doing it to cause some action against America.

The media is being used to do the PR work to brand Americans as traitors if they make statements about the regime. Sad to say, it is working.

Thank you for telling the truth. This is the worst time for our country since our founding fathers created our constitution. What would they think if they could see how this regime is trampling on all the things that have made our country great.

CD

12 March 2002

This means so much to me to know that there are people who understand the real hypocrisy of the US government since September 11. I've been sick to my stomach to see all the lies that Rumsfeld and Bush are pushing on the American people—"blind patriotism" is all it is. But what really gets me is that so many "educated" American people continuously fall victim to this hogwash.

JA

12 March 2002

Dear Sirs,

I must congratulate you on your excellent journalism. Since first reading your articles you have kept me captivated with your mature and honest reporting. But saying this, are you getting anywhere? Every day I am more and more amazed at the biased, totally one-sided view put forward by our press. I have absolutely no time for any politicians and believed journalists would provide our salvation. I now realize they are not the people I thought they were. It's only one in a thousand with any honest

conscience.

Grateful you are there.

MR

12 March 2002

Dear WSWWS,

Thanks for your coverage of world politics, etc. I find it increasingly ironic that the best—if not only—way I can get a more comprehensive picture of the corporate hegemony ruling the west is from a socialist site, but there you go.

The day after the attacks, I had an argument with Americans visiting Cape Breton (in Canada where I live), telling them that Bush's rapid, mandated response of worldwide war, put together in less than 24 hours, was obviously due to preparation on a large, deep-rooted scale. The reason for the argument, however, was because I was so bold as to cite historical precedent, namely Roosevelt's occlusion of the precise knowledge of the time and place of the infamous Pearl Harbor attacks. Any government which can do one, can surely do the other? I was not even saying that this was necessarily wicked—although it is of course—just pointing out that maybe things were not as black and white as the media was painting.

I think what is most disturbing is the degree to which western diplomacy is dominated by corporate concerns and the degree to which such concerns are increasingly divorced from the small-town, anti-feudal/aristocratic roots from which democratic capitalism sprang and the degree to which the fourth estate is simply an arm of that same corporate behemoth.

I believe that this is the emerging "war" of the next phase, a global conflict in which energy and other key natural resources—perhaps water, for example—and also ideology will begin to dictate policy, through the profit-loss filters on corporate spreadsheets in the hard drives on the screens of lobbyists, diplomats and news editors throughout the world. They are the ruling classes now and bin Laden, frankly, is as much their pawn as their adversary, and indeed used to be on the CIA payroll.

AH

Canada

11 March 2002

You couldn't quite call the US assault at Gardez, Afghanistan a defeat or a disaster because the losses were quite small (if one can believe the reports) and supposedly the US military will eventually eliminate the resistance in the caves but you could call it a fiasco or debacle. It's been nine days so far and even with massive bombing the resistance is holding on, Afghan allies have left the field and US troops are retiring.

The press has tried to put a good face on the situation but it looks quite bad. The US troops were unprepared and the Afghan allies in disarray. We hear from the US troops leaving the field that it was really cold up there and the weather was bad and they didn't have sleeping bags and "the water froze." I don't know what they learn at the military academy but many of us military non-professionals know that at 11,000 ft., at 33 degrees north, in the middle of March it is going to be very cold. One general at the scene says that the operation is winding down; however Gen. Franks tells us that it is not so. They can't even get their stories straight.

The Afghanistan operation has been a series of blunders from the beginning and would have ended in a US defeat if it weren't for the use of indiscriminate massive bombing and the Northern Alliance. As it is, bin Laden has escaped along with Mullah Omar and not one high-ranking officer has been captured or killed. Afghanistan is in chaos and will remain so for the foreseeable future—the factions are fighting amongst themselves, the country is unstable and unsafe. Thousands of Al Qaeda and Taliban have been killed but thousands of innocent, noncombatant civilians have been killed as well. Afghanistan is no longer a terrorist haven—the terrorists have gone somewhere else perhaps to return soon. In December 2001, the National Geographic gave the troop strength of the Afghanistan army as zero: "no national military"—this is what the might of

the US military has been up against since October 2001—one of the militarily weakest countries in the world.

It is frightening to think what the US would do against a real army such as the next target Iraq. During the Gulf War the mighty US military was able to kill more Iraqi civilians than soldiers and the biggest massacre of Iraqi troops was done by the bold Gen. Barry McCaffrey when he unleashed an attack on retreating Iraqi troops after the cease-fire was in place. In Yugoslavia, the US military killed thousands of innocent civilians, destroyed infrastructure and nonmilitary targets in clear violation of war crimes standards while the Yugoslav army left the field practically unscathed. The US military is not able to fight in these kinds of conditions—only massive slaughter from bombings with the massacre of thousands of innocents will make a country surrender. Saddam Hussein will probably hold out for a long time as his people are decimated. The press won't tell you this but this is how it will be.

Beware America if this is what you want.

LR

11 March 2002

Thank you for this eloquent, piercing editorial. I needed it right now. I'm beginning to feel more and more that we have entered the world of 1984, with Oceania always at war with Eastasia—with the telescreens blaring constant celebrations of the latest "victory." It's truly sickening and frightening—and yet it has become a reality—right down to our own "Goldstein," Osama bin Laden, who is conveniently resurrected as needed to justify further rainings of death. Meanwhile the crowd roars as we watch another 10-ton bomb explode on helpless villagers. Where do we go from here? I feel like Winston Smith, imprisoned in the bowels of the Ministry of Truth. It's hard not to feel hopeless.

Thank you for being a voice of reason, for speaking clear, hard truths. You are fighting the hopelessness. You are a source of inspiration to us all.

AA

California

10 March 2002



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