

Letters from our readers

18 September 2002

On US executive compensation:

I have been appalled for many years about the disparity between what is paid to the heads of corporations and what is paid to workers. Events in recent months have brought these concerns to the fore with the executives at failed companies like Enron and Global Crossings escaping with millions while the employees lose their jobs, retirement savings and their way of life. Not only were these executives not worth the compensation they received, they were crooks whose mistakes will eventually be paid for by the taxpayers. This repeats the debacle of failed savings and loans of the last Bush administration (amazing what short memories most people have when in the voting booth!) Now we have the revelation of Jack Welch's retirement package. Admittedly he turned around a company in need but no one is worth \$17,000 a day as a retiree consultant. This is obscene and it is amazing to me that someone who would subsequently "give back the perks" when caught could have morally accepted them in the first place. (Sounds more like he doesn't want his soon to be ex-wife to get them.)

The purpose of my email is to inquire if there is any organized group, particularly of higher education or union employees, who protest these enormous compensation packages. These groups have pension funds which invest in many of these companies. Enormous compensation packages mean less money for the stockholders, despite the "value" of a truly visionary and skilled executive. It seems to me that these "pension plan stockholders" could wield considerable weight in reversing this trend to increase executive compensation.

I am also wondering if there are any movements you are aware of which are pushing to change legislation regarding the registration of companies abroad (i.e., Bermuda) to avoid taxes and to toughen laws and push for indictments in relation to "cooking the books" as has apparently happened with several significant

companies.

JN

16 September 2002

On "Another Florida election debacle, and its political lessons"

Hear, Hear! Congratulations on this well written article. The Democratic and Republican parties are co-conspirators in both the 2000 and 2002 election debacle and the American people just don't get it! They don't have the time to be bothered. There is no political party that represents the worker, which makes up the majority of people in the US. Is it any wonder that less than 50 percent of eligible voters actually vote in the US?

Being from Florida, I long for the ability of this state to conduct a reasonably honest election, but Florida elections appear to be so corrupt that a real and honest election seems to be an impossibility! Perhaps we should call in UN observers in order to return some semblance of validity! Jeb, according to his own political ads, seems only to be able to get traffic lights installed on select roads, but he certainly does not know how to conduct an honest election, improve public education or to correct this state's inability to keep track of some of its foster children! And that's only the beginning. As usual, our so-called "choice" for governor is, as usual, between the "lesser of two evils." Think of it, this government wants to export this "democracy" to the world! What a bunch of nonsense! I just hope the American public wakes up and real soon!

Regards ,

JM

16 September 2002

On "Bush's past business dealings come back to haunt him"

Hello Friends,

I wish Bush's past dealings *would* come back to haunt him. Unfortunately, most people aren't reading

the *World Socialist Web Site*. I loved this article, by the way. The masses have been brainwashed by constant exposure to mainstream media. That means that all old George has to do is ignore his past and not mention it. He can just talk about decency and honesty like he really cared about it. Heck, maybe he's stupid enough to believe it himself!

He did the same thing in his speech to the UN on Iraq. Bush self-righteously complained about how Iraq has ignored countless UN resolutions, as if this was something new to the world. Everyone should know that Israel, our client state in the Middle East, has ignored many more resolutions, with US help, for the past 54 years! And all this while Israel is murdering people, starving people and stealing their land...

As I was watching C-SPAN's coverage of Bush's Iraq speech, along with Congressional retorts and comments from the international media, I kept saying to myself, "Israel, what about Israel—Israel ignores resolutions too, Israel threatens and slaughters neighbors, Israel has and proliferates WMD and nukes! What about Israel." Finally, at the end of C-SPAN's coverage, some wimpy British guest on a BBC news panel had the gumption to point out that "certain other states in the region also ignore UN resolutions." Thank God—the BBC host helped him out and said those magic words I had been waiting for, "you mean Israel..."

All the press and the government has to do is talk righteously and ignore their dirty laundry. It is, sadly, a very simple and effective strategy...

CM

13 September 2002

On "Britain's trade union federation lines up behind Bush/Blair war drive"

To Julie Hyland,

I was most disappointed and amazed that the TUC offered so little in the way of argument and resistance to the Blair philosophy for the Iraq war. When I knew that this was to be discussed at this meeting, I felt totally confident that the TUC would ensure that Blair got a dose of reality and that this would force the matter to be the subject of a debate in the parliament.

The level of activity here in Australia over the past month has ensured that this matter will be debated this week in the parliament and if it goes to a vote in the Senate, then we can expect a rejection of any support

for Howard and his sycophantic following of Bush and the US administration on this matter.

But the UK? What has happened with the unions?

One last item. The Canadian prime minister gave what I consider to be an excellent TV interview on one of the channels this week. CBC, I think. He made some points which I think are worthy of reading if time allows.

Good article on WSWS ... well written, but the content was very disappointing, indeed.

RW

14 September 2002



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