

Letters on global antiwar protests

19 February 2003

The following is a selection of letters to the WSWS on the international antiwar protests held February 15-16.

Condoleezza Rice made the following remark regarding the robust international protests against an unprovoked invasion of Iraq: "People can say what they think. But the fact is, they're not saying what they're thinking in Baghdad, because that's a regime that cuts people's tongues off." This remark was made against a backdrop in which the United States, France and Germany have been bickering about deploying NATO troops to Turkey, a regime where the State Department itself has documented flagrant human rights abuses and political repression. Rice should know that they're not saying what they're thinking in Turkish Kurdistan either. When it comes to amputating body parts, Saudi Arabia, another US ally, is well known for the practice, and in fact just recently got around to outlawing slavery in 1962, the last nation in the world to do so. Anyone who is aware of these basic facts, many of which are available on the State Department's own web site, can only meet Rice's comments and the uncritical manner in which they are reported with disbelief and contempt.

RG

18 February 2003

Dear Editor:

For those of us who have been active in the fight to stop imperialist war against Iraq in the last six months, this weekend was a turning point. Not only is this struggle assuming an international character, but with each protest the working men and women who make up these huge crowds become more and more receptive to socialist ideas and an anti-imperialist message.

The question remains: what next? How do we pry the consciousness of the working class away from the liberal wing of the Democrats? How do we translate protest in the streets to protest in the workplace? In short: how do we turn this into a class struggle against the perpetrators of the upcoming slaughter of Iraqis?

As a student I can say with some confidence that campuses across America will, in the coming weeks, be shut down by politically motivated strikes and walkouts. But students do not have the same social role as the working class. Our relationship to the means of production is fundamentally different, and we lack the power to strike at the heart of the capitalist system and physically prevent this war from taking place.

Throughout this crisis the WSWS has provided clear, succinct and accurate coverage of the immense struggle taking place. What we need now is a firm program that radical youth and working people can put into place to stop the Bush gang's seizure of Iraqi oilfields and slaughter of defenseless men, women and children.

Thanks for your excellent work.

JI

University of California, Santa Cruz

17 February 2003

Dear WSWS,

I attended Saturday's antiwar rally in London. It was the first ever protest I attended. The number of people at the rally and the mobilisation of what would normally be regarded as those who are politically apathetic was amazing. The people demonstrated what massive opposition Blair's government, and those all over the world, will face when they attempt to take actions not supported by their populations.

Whilst the number of people present impressed me, the speeches at the rally in Hyde Park did not. There was a lot of rhetoric denouncing Blair and the like, but nothing truly impressive was said. The opposition of many of the speakers, as your web site stated, was half-hearted, as many of them would support war if authorised by the UN. There seemed to be a general appeal to nationalism, and anti-Americanism, particularly amongst Labour Party members such as George Galloway. What none of the speakers said that I believe needed to be said was that this movement must denounce all forms of racism: declare outright

opposition to Bush and his administration whilst declaring our support for the American people, declare complete opposition to Zionism, whilst making clear that we are not anti-Semitic, and support the right of refugees to seek asylum which has been so viciously attacked here. The internationalism of the movement needed to be more fully embraced.

There is an unprecedented vacuum of power both here and all over the world. Not one party in the UK is willing to represent the views of the people on Iraq. By linking this war against Iraq with anti-democratic, oppressive measures taken here and around the world, and capitalism's ruthless plunder of this earth, and its people, a party such as yours can fill this vacuum!

Keep bringing people the truth,

RB

18 February 2003



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