

Letters on the Iraq war and the US media

3 May 2003

Below we post a selection of recent letters to the World Socialist Web Site.

On "ABC News *Primetime* interview: Country music group holds its own against right-wing attack"

Great article about the Dixie Chicks and hooray for Maines for her statement about ... accept us. They have a right to express their views and many of us out there are ashamed of Bush and what he has done to our country.

PR

29 April 2003

I am with you WWSW and you can let the Dixie Chicks know that I not only stand behind them I would even stand in front of them to protect them from the right-wing zealots!!

TH

A Real American for real freedom

29 April 2003

I sent a copy of your excellent article on the ABC *Primetime* interview directly to Diane Sawyer, in case she missed it!

JC

29 April 2003

After I heard Ms. Maines' comments about brain-dead Bush I immediately bought all of their CDs. I'll vote with my pocket book and these talented and brilliant musicians deserve our respect and monetary support. Bush has no talent and everything was handed to him. The Dixie Chicks are brilliant and have enormous depth and intellect. I urge all progressive and liberal thinkers to put their money where their mouth is and support the Chicks through record sales and concert tickets.

BW

Pennsylvania

29 April 2003

On "Manufacturing the news: *New York Times* report on weapons of mass destruction"

You write: "This account conveniently satisfies two requirements of the Bush administration: It maintains that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction on the eve of the war, thus providing a retroactive rationale for the US invasion, and it asserts that these weapons no longer exist, providing an explanation for the failure of the US government to find them."

Actually it satisfies four, since it also ties this to Al Qaeda and to Syria.

As to the problem of precursors, this could be anything. Under the rules established for purchases of supplies from oil revenues, chlorine was classified as a precursor and banned thus contributing to the problems of water purification and sewage disposal. The hiding of precursors is a particularly meaningless charge since it makes it easy for anyone with a minimum of knowledge to provide "proof" to the investigators. I suppose that is the reason for not disclosing the particular chemicals found. Doing so might cause people to discount the report of a major find.

I've noted that the propaganda that passes for news is becoming increasingly blatant. It's almost as though they have a complete contempt for the readers or audience and an indifference to their opinion.

As you point out this article is a particularly outrageous one, but they have been doing this in one form or another for some time.

"All the news that's fit to print" has become "All the news that fits we print."

RR

Florida

23 April 2003

If according to Rumsfeld the search for weapons of mass destruction is "not like a treasure hunt where you just run around looking everywhere, hoping you find something," then what were the UN inspectors doing there in the first place? If the US forces are not able to find weapons now that they occupy the country, what chance did the UN inspectors have while Hussein's regime was still in power? The secretary of defense has implicitly admitted to millions of households in living color that the inspections were a farce, although the "fair and balanced" news broadcasters feel no obligation whatsoever to point this out.

I am stunned every time I turn on the TV these days. The "ricin" that was found in a Paris subway turned out to be wheat germ, although for two weeks while the substance was being tested broadcasters missed no opportunity to ominously reinforce that "terror can happen at any time without warning."

Yet in the same segments they would admit that ricin is

not a weapon of mass destruction, but an assassin's tool used to kill one person at a time, contradicting their own warnings.

Whenever a satellite zooms in on a part of "liberated" Iraq in impressive detail (compliments of digitalglobe.com), I wonder if Hans Blix was equipped with this marvelous technology. He certainly could have used it to spot trucks leaving an alleged weapons compound before he got there, which Rumsfeld asserted was the reason that his "bulletproof" intelligence never led to the UN inspectors nabbing any weapons.

The top example I have seen was a retired marine major who opined on CNN that pesticides found in Iraq might qualify as a WMD since they could somehow be used on troops. On top of this ridiculous statement comes the troublesome fact that this characterization would also condemn US forces for having sprayed Agent Orange in Vietnam, although the media would not want viewers to forget for one second that wantonly killing Vietnamese people is justified, whereas inviting medieval despots to Texas to schmooze about an oil pipeline is acceptable.

The media is simply out of control, and millions of people with similar observations are undoubtedly shaking their heads in disbelief.

RG

23 April 2003

When I read it [the *New York Times* article on weapons of mass destruction], I actually wondered if there would be something about this article on your web site. Although it probably should have come as no surprise, I was astounded by it. And appalled. It was so obviously a fabrication, I thought: how bad can it get? CNN described this scientist—I'm probably not quoting exactly—"not a 'smoking gun', but a 'golden bullet.'" You have to admit it almost sounds facetious on their part. One source proving WMDs, Syrian connection and Al Qaeda connection! And today, actually I guess it started yesterday, we're hearing about the Iranian conspiracy. Their sending operatives into Southern Iraq to stir up the Shiites. (I wonder what lengths Washington will go to crush Iraq's determination to choose their own form of government?)

When do you think the American people will say, "I've heard enough"?

SH

23 April 2003

There is no doubt that finding those two bottles of Chlorox in the Baghdad laundry within a mile of the gas station, is a sure sign of their intent to use chemical warfare. We got them just in the nick of time...

CM

Seattle

24 April 2003

After reading James Conachy's April 30, 2003, "US Troops Gun Down Iraqi Demonstrators" and its summary of the US's naked parading of Iraqi theft suspects, I was struck that Iraqis were quoted as saying that suspects shouldn't be accused of crime without certainty that they're guilty. In the US, it is common, rampant even, to broadcast names and photos of "suspects" all over the news, their guilt presumed a priori, and the public largely convinced of it by the repeat showings across their TV screens of the faces of the accused (often dark-skinned) while police solemnly intone warnings that the accused could be dangerous. Let's hope the Iraqis can rid themselves of the US before they're degraded as much as Americans are.

DG

Austin, Texas

30 April 2003

It seems the US corporate interests that own most of the media have used psychological war tactics on their own people; "Support Our Troops" has put family against one another, friend against friend in a campaign to divide the nation much like the Civil War; those for slavery globalization and privatization of resources and those against. The way oil companies go into countries—see *Forbes* magazine 4-28-03—make sweatshops look like Disney world.

Let's look at the way we take care of our soldiers when they come home: 106,000 people came home sick after GWI [the father of George Bush] to be told "it's all in your mind." 10,000 have since died. Vietnam vets came home sick and were told to prove Agent Orange was the reason. Even today 5,000 vets contract cancer every year from Agent Orange. Two days after WWII began Congress is debating huge cuts in aid to veterans. These warmongers turning on their own people is the sad part because we are paying for it, in not voting, for paying taxes, for spending so much time cheering for everything but the truth.

J

28 April 2003



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