

Letters from our readers

7 July 2003

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

Dear Sir/Ma'am:

America's invasion and occupation of Iraq is Nazi-like, as is the behavior of Israel towards the Palestinians, the bombing of Iraqi sheep fields by the British and the treatment of alleged Taliban prisoners in Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay.

Hitler (understandably) admired the British and their empire. The port of Liverpool grew fat on the slave trade, in which Britain was paramount throughout the 18th century. Millions of Africans are said to have died during slavery and the Triangle Trade's Atlantic crossing's ferocious horror equates well with and foreshadows Nazi practices.

I've just read your terrific breakdown of America's atrocious, illegal occupation of Iraq—Humanity will fight America and humanity will win. The reason I say this is because one of my theories is that if a regime is sufficiently blatant in its oppression, people will not stand it. Unless America is willing and able to kill the whole of humanity, it cannot win.

The current administration of that country is so crude, so racist, so immoral and so evil in its aggression to others (let alone the millions in jail in America) that, at this time in history, socialism will win.

A better world is possible and necessary and the workers of America can bring that country's economy to a standstill; they have enormous power. The ruling class has enough brains to realize this and jollies along its workers with "bread and circuses" (food hall, shopping malls, electronic junk). But there is no real freedom—only two parties to choose from and they both stink. Let the workers be made aware of this. If they make revolution and rid the world of capitalism, they will have all they have now and more. They will also have the marvelous humanistic glow of successful socialism.

Thanks for your information.

All the best,

MM

26 June 2003

I find it deeply troubling the intent of the USA by any means possible to secure for itself and the European countries the supply of oil belonging to other nations. Here's hoping Iraq will be a nightmare that will not go away.

HW

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

26 June 2003

On "Rising popular anger behind attack on British troops in southern Iraq"

Dear Editor,

This excellent article shatters the myth of the British as the "not so bad" invaders. As a Northern Irish woman, I also appreciate the reference to the despicable behavior of the British Army in my country. My whole family were incensed to hear military commanders boast of their "experience" in internment and torture.

This evening, I tried to watch "Fighting the War," which showed evidence of brutality. "Our Boyz" came across as little more than racist thugs. One officer said cheerfully, "We'll go out tonight and, if we see anyone with a weapon, we'll shoot them." The situation was not secure

and none of these invaders had language skills. However, anyone armed for their own protection was to be killed. Really impressive! Does he accept that it is also legitimate to kill an armed invader, because (s)he poses a threat?

This program also disputed a major lie broadcast during the invasion, that Iraqi fighters had fired on their own people. I think the BBC must be forced to explain why this material, supplied three months ago, is only being aired now. Is it now BBC policy to televise lies and retract them months later?

Of course, as the article states, the truth was sacrificed to spin the myth. Recent killing of children and US soldiers has been absent from TV news because it reflects the real situation. The myth of "Saddam loyalists, insurgents, guerrillas," etc., is shoved at us daily. Rumsfeld even tried to say that the killing of the six British redcaps was evidence of Iraqi "links to Al Qaeda." It really is getting bizarre!

What can we do to get the Blairites and prostitutes out of the BBC? I am sick of the sight of them and am canceling my TV license. Somehow, I feel that I am not the only one. The Beeb is obviously under pressure from viewers, but I feel that more direct action is needed.

Regards,

RK

29 June 2003

On "New York Times reporter Judith Miller accused of 'hijacking' military unit in Iraq"

Re: Bill Vann's article on *New York Times* reporter Judith Miller. It should be clear by now that Miller is an operative who has been embedded in the *Times*.

DK

Los Angeles

27 June 2003

Good, no, great journalism and quite frankly I don't care if you're a socialist or a Cubs fan, it's still great journalism at a time when there is very little adequate journalism. Keep it up, kick their butts.

MC

30 June 2003

Sir:

I have followed the Miller story for somewhat longer than the current article suggests she has been whipping up the jingoists: She started this at least as far back as the first week of September '02 with the article she and Michael Gordon filed on the (fictitious) AIEA report—then used at once by the administration to assert that Iraq had a full-blown nuclear weapons program. The *Washington Times* followed up by filing a story that countered Miller but was given no play and died. In it AIEA directly stated (from Vienna) there was no such report either in 1998 or earlier. The new press secretary to be, Scott (something), allowed as how the White House was talking about a report drafted in 1991. The draft as I remember existed but had almost nothing even obliquely to do with an Iraq nuclear threat. The reports she files almost always have some line in them that triggers a "wait a minute" response in a skeptical reader and this one was no exception. I looked from then on for a follow-up, a confirmation, a refinement, a repudiation—but none came even after the *Washington Times* blew holes through it. Is this how real liars get ahead?

You bet.

In April, she was with MET Alpha, as you say, but she was not just filing print stories—and her boss the ever upright John Burns got a plateful when he tried to bring her into line—she was also broadcasting over PBS. The transcript is available online: the scene reinforces and was triggered by the *Times* story of the Iraqi in the baseball cap pointing at the ground and quoted as saying biologicals and chemicals were buried where he pointed. Then she maintained in response to Lehrer's softballs, that this was better than a silver bullet, this was proof that we had found all the pieces in parts, meaning that the dastardly clever Iraqis had only pre-stationed precursors which could be whipped into WMD in minutes. This meant that Rumsfeld didn't have to continue shuffling about finding ways to say we didn't really expect to *find* real weapons, etc., etc.

Then finally to all 5 million PBS watchers Miller says the real weapons are in Syria and off we went. Bush and the team began threatening an invasion of Damascus within hours of the PBS broadcast.

No one ever has to take this manure back, either, which is marvelous.

Here we have General Judy essentially dictating foreign and defense policy. And we thought Daniel Ellsberg was a threat.

DH

Albany, New York

1 July 2003

Dear Sirs,

Thank you very much for your excellent article "US Supreme Court upholds affirmative action"

I am so sick of liberal and so-called "left" publications constantly proclaiming the "virtues" of affirmative action. It is refreshing to read a genuine Marxist analysis of what affirmative action really is—a tool that provides the illusion of equality while the working class and the genuinely disadvantaged remain unable to gain access to higher education. Affirmative action is also racism under the guise of "civil rights"—it gives deliberate advantage to some races of people at the expense of others. It is only too easy to imagine the uproar that would occur if a college were to grant white students preference because they were white.

Once again, thank you for an excellent piece of work.

Regards,

MG

New Zealand

28 June 2003

On "The politics of US Medicare 'reform': cynicism, cowardice and social reaction"

Dear Kate,

As if it weren't enough to cut off prescription drug funding, the federal government, at the behest of their vulture buddies in the pharmaceutical industry, is trying to intimidate Canadian pharmacies who ship their lower-cost drugs to customers in the United States and threaten to shut down the stores that place the orders in Canada and deliver the goods!

Health care is not an auction! Health care is not a night in Las Vegas playing roulette! Where is the humanity in these right-wing ideologues? Could it be that they know that they will never, ever, be at the mercy of the "market" when they need health care? Could this be because they get their health care *free*? Oh, yes, "socialized" medicine is available, provided you are in the right "society." Rep. Bill Thomas [Republican of California] should be thrown into the Pacific Ocean by a mob of octogenarians!

CZ

San Francisco

30 June 2003

I am continually impressed by the quality of the writing and analysis, and the sound judgment in your articles. And I am not easy to please! As a Massachusetts senior citizen I have already written to Senator Kennedy, who has surprised and disappointed me by his actions on this bill.

Curiously, Kennedy also was taken in by the "Leave Children Behind" education bill, a similar fraud, also designed not to provide the needed services, but simply to herd citizens, like cattle, in the direction of privatization. I am especially annoyed that after that bill, Kennedy still has not learned.

Unlike many of my contemporaries, I do not feel the need for prescription drug coverage. For years I have been a student of nutrition and a user of supplements. Although I had a heart attack several years ago, I am presently managing with a targeted program of nutrition. But sound information about nutrition is almost never readily available to the public and it is no wonder that seniors feel that prescriptions are their only option.

I joined a HMO supplemental program, which was fine initially, since they accepted the Medicare charge as full payment. Then the cost went to \$25 more per month, then \$75. I think it is now \$100, but since I dropped out, I don't know. (I believe this is called "bait and switch.") I am especially concerned that part of the increase seems due to unnecessary coverage for things like physical therapy (which was a waste in my case) and acupuncture. Now I have only Medicare. But I don't dare use the Medicare, because it is hard to find doctors who will accept it, and because I don't want to incur a whole assortment of co-pays, deductibles and uncovered charges. So I am actually considering doing without insurance entirely. We all have to die some time! And with a limited budget I could use that \$600/year for other things. Through having been too trusting I now need to pinch every penny twice.

Also, for the record, I worked for 10 years for a medical organization and I have seen it from the inside. Many physicians seem like dedicated people but they are just as baffled as the rest of us. I have never understood why on earth an employer should be involved in one's medical coverage. There is no necessary reason for this. This is the government's role.

Thank you for trying to help the boiled frogs.

NR

30 June 2003



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