

Letters from our readers

7 November 2003

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

On "In wake of helicopter attack—Washington prepares for mass killing in Iraq"

One nice addition to an already excellent piece by Bill Vann on November 6 would have been to point out that Trent "mow 'em down" Lott avoided military service when he had his chance to "defend American Freedom."

NV

6 November 2003

I can say from actual experience that the attacks against the Nazi occupiers of Holland during the first year after the May 10, 1940 invasion were only the starting stage of the resistance. This holds equally true for those who are occupying Iraq today.

In Holland it also started slowly, but after gaining experience and becoming better organized in *Verzet* (Dutch for resistance) the German occupiers were under daily attack in one part of Holland or the other, making it practically impossible to halt the attacks and identify the resistance people doing it. This caused the German occupiers to start rounding up people of all ages at random and shoot them in the town center. In many towns in Holland you can find monuments where the Nazis carried out mass killings such as these. But it did not slowdown the *Verzet*.

The Americans are starting to do this in Iraq now. Surely the Iraqi people will also put up monuments where the Americans perpetrate this random killing.

When the *Verzet* attacked a German army general on the highway near the town of Putten the Nazi occupiers rounded up *all* males, including the newborn in the hospital, and machine-gunned the lot. After the war Putten was a town completely devoid of males and everything was run by women. Did these atrocities slowdown the *Verzet*? Not on your life. It made the *Verzet* even more determined to attack the German Nazi occupiers.

American people have no idea what war is about because they have never experienced it personally in America. Yes, some have family members killed in the foolish wars America has been involved in, but they were always killed in some other country they allowed themselves to be sent to by the Washington warmongers. When researching history it may come as a surprise to American people that in its 200 plus years there are only 25 years that America was not involved in war itself or stoking the flames of war in some part of the world by supplying killing machinery and American military personnel behind the curtains.

Sincerely,

Dr. FR

6 November 2003

On "Khodorkovsky's arrest and the defenders of billionaires'

'democracy'"

Dear Mr. Vann,

I must chastise you for failing to mention that billionaires constitute one of the world's most oppressed and exploited social layers.

Do you not read the *Wall Street Journal* or the *New York Times*? These fine organs of journalistic truth have repeatedly reported on the appalling treatment of the super-wealthy, cataloguing the numerous injustices perpetrated against them; the arrest of Khordorkovsky being the latest example of these heinous acts.

Fortunately, with the brilliant George W Bush at the helm, and supported in the press by the likes of Mr Thomas Friedman (truly a beacon of journalistic integrity), the tide is being turned for the much oppressed class of billionaires.

With the liberation of Iraq (from the Baathists and its troublesome oil wealth), the US administration has called upon these paragons of philanthropic virtue to assist with the reconstruction of this country. The WWSW has noted that America's self-sacrificing corporations such as Haliburton have taken up this burden with great eagerness. Truly, the Iraqis are blessed.

The arrest of Mr. Khordorkovsky is most unfortunate and must be deemed a great blow by the ordinary Russian. It is people like Mr. Khordorkovsky who, by a wholesale transfer of public wealth into private bank accounts, have rekindled the spirit of Russian self-sufficiency. In the USA, Mr. Khordorkovsky's counterparts, with the assistance of George Bush, are doing the same. Already, ordinary working Americans are breaking their dependency upon pensions, medical aid, decent public education and a reliable source of electricity.

Need I say more?

Yours,

EG

5 November 2003

"The argument that 'they all did it,' and therefore the arrest of Khodorkovsky is unjust, ignores precisely what it is they all did ... the collective wealth of one of the world's largest countries being stolen from its people by a handful of politically connected gangsters...

"...Khodorkovsky was the biggest winner in a process that saw the transfer of some 70 percent of the wealth of the former Soviet Union into the hands of barely a dozen individuals."

Thank you! I was looking for some information and comment on the less-than-solid foundations of global "democracy" and "freedom." It's an outrage. The peoples of the world are more enslaved then ever and Orwell would be proud of our media guardians.

Thanks again. I must make it a habit to stop by WSWS as you folks do some of the best research and analysis around.

PH

4 November 2003

On "US television network caves in to right wing over Reagan mini-series"

When CBS caved at the threat of a boycott and in reaction to the attacks by the Republic National Committee it did not get off the hook. The Republic National Committee is now demanding of Showtime that they run the banner denouncing their own show.

What is difficult to understand is why so much deference is paid to the threats from the Right. Much of it is hype with little to back it up other than the implied threat of violence (as in Miami in 2000).

For instance the Freepers were able to get an enormous amount of coverage during the peace and antiwar marches. The *Washington Post* in particular went out of the way to cover their counterdemonstrations without revealing the numbers involved in those demonstrations. Here you had tens of thousands of demonstrators for peace and only 100 or less supporting Bush, yet there was an attempt to give them equal attention and to hide the facts from the reader.

What is most interesting about this is if one followed the Freepers at their web site you would find grandiose plans for mass counterdemonstrations with tactics to disrupt the peace march, all allegedly designed by a patriotic Marine veteran. It was all hype.

Even the patriotic Marine may have been fictional. He certainly didn't sound like a Marine. He sounded more like an ex-cheerleader who avoided the draft (like Trent Lott). There weren't thousands coming from around the country to support Bush as he claimed. Even the claim of 100 showing up could be disputed on the basis of the pictures taken of the Bush supporters.

The Republicans have a well organized and well financed reaction team that can at a moment's notice mount a campaign against anything that threatens the images they are projecting. But it is a facade. Beyond a hard core of political operatives and mad dog rightists how deep is the threat? They mobilize the radio talk show hosts and the Fox cheer leaders. That generates noise. The rest of the media seems unable or unwilling to carefully examine what is happening. They report on it making it a real story and giving it a substance that it really doesn't have. But is there a real constituency ready to act?

The Dixie Chicks suggest that the constituency is pretty shallow. Clear Channel and other right-wing media organizations could stop playing their records and hold DJ-inspired demonstrations but when it came to attending their concerts and buying their records the fans turned out and cheered them on.

One of the first concerts was in South Carolina, a very conservative state, yet the Dixie Chicks were welcomed and applauded.

The truth is that in the modern age it is possible to create a nonexistent reality and big organizations will respond to it, just as CBS did.

If organizations such as FAIR and MOVE and the Democratic National Committee had immediately come to the aid of CBS perhaps things would have been different. That still doesn't

excuse the cowardice of the CBS executives.

Thank you for another excellent report on a vital issue.

RR

Orange Park, Florida

5 November 2003

On "Clint Eastwood, the critics and the 'heart of darkness'"

I would like to thank David Walsh for his insightful and deeply considered film reviews. His recent review of Clint Eastwood's *Mystic River* was very informative. I have no intention of seeing this film. It has been my observation that, if a certain type of film is reviewed glowingly by mainstream reviewers, that film is almost certainly guaranteed to be vile.

For decades Eastwood's films have been given almost universal praise, and they usually turn out to be poorly acted, poorly written and wretchedly directed. I haven't seen an Eastwood film since fawning critics fooled me into seeing *Firefox*, a farce of a film. (I did see *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* on cable, just to see how badly he mangled the book.)

Critics are always telling us that this or that film (like *Blue Velvet*, and Scorsese's or Tarantino's monstrosities) has insight into the "dark side" of human nature. Such a film rarely tells me anything real about humans, but does tell me a lot about the twisted psychology of its director. I am not a prude and I am not shocked by violence or sexuality, but I am disgusted that these directors assume that their own neuroses are traits shared by all humans. There is a deeply anti-human sentiment in these films that feeds into fashionable cynicism, a cynicism that the more fascistic elements of our society love to foster. If humans are basically no good, then they need a "strong" leader, religion, etc., to take over their lives, and they are not deserving of freedom and equality. I fear for our nation and the world, not because of humanity, but because of the way the ruling class has tried to turn us against ourselves.

Thank you again, and thank all of you at WSWS for your work.

AJ

Columbia, Missouri

5 November 2003



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