

Letters from our readers

9 December 2003

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

On "Massacre in Samarra: US lies and self-delusion"

David Walsh's informative article on the massacre in Samarra makes it clear that the best way for the United States to reduce global terrorism is to stop taking part in it.

If terrorism is defined as the unlawful use or threatened use of violence with the intention of intimidating or coercing societies or governments for ideological or political reasons, then the invasion and occupation of Iraq is terrorism, plain and simple.

HW

Chicago

3 December 2003

On "Terrorism commission caves in to White House over 9/11 documents"

I just returned from Paris and I was reading your article on the cave-in by Kean and Hamilton to White House refusal to release all the documentation needed by the commission.

What you failed to mention is that Hamilton played a huge part in allowing Bush II's daddy off the hook on Iran-contra. While a congressman, Hamilton was instrumental in narrowing the focus of investigations into drug-running by the contras that would have led straight to pappy bush. Evidently, his patrons in Indiana, the same ones who promoted Quayle for vice-president to the previous Bush in residence in the White House, made sure that Hamilton would in no way upset the status quo.

The families of 9/11 victims should be incensed and they should demand that the commission subpoena all the documents it needs. Guys like Cleland should resign with news conferences stating exactly why they are leaving and in what ways the others are hindering the honest pursuit of the truth.

The American people and people everywhere need to know the names of these people and their previous misdeeds to keep a scorecard for the day of reckoning.

Keep up the good work,

MC

7 December 2003

On "Georgia's 'rose revolution': a made-in-America coup"

Editors,

The tip-off for me that the US had a hand in Georgia's coup was the simultaneous use of the expression "People Power" by multiple media outlets here. Other times I've seen the expression: Marcos's and then Estrada's departures in the Philippines; the Sandinistas being voted out in Nicaragua, and; Milosevic's leaving in Yugoslavia. Obviously this is a euphemism for a US-orchestrated coup, in the PR-language of a cynical State Department. No doubt future displays of "People Power" are in the works for Venezuela and elsewhere.

Your work has always been valuable to me. Keep it up!

LG

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

6 December 2003

On "Medicare bill marks major step in destruction of government health

plan for US seniors"

Young adults in the US do most certainly lack health insurance. The US medical system needs to be revamped. If you have money or a job with health care benefits, then you will most likely get the care needed. "Most likely" does not mean that you will, though. There must be thousands of health insurance companies in the US, but many will not cover existing conditions even if you are lucky enough to be allowed to be covered by one of them. There are charity hospitals, but they can do only so much. They do not always have the necessary medical equipment and machines at their disposal to help diagnose a disease then care for the patient.

The technology at the disposal of many medical institutions in the US is superior. The problem arises in how to get permission to get the individual to these facilities and in a timely manner. Some forms of cancer do not allow much time for the unnecessary lengthy process to take place. Communities sometimes get together and raise funds to help someone in need. It's as though the US has to have charity as part of its broken system rather than a national health care system.

The US does not like the word socialist, so another word—democratic—health care system could be used. Many Americans believe that if a national health care system did come about, the hospitals would be filled with people coming for no reason. There would be lines and lines of people who were not ill at all. They would simply come because it would be considered free health care. I can not and do not believe that line of thought.

Many doctors and the HMOs are out to make big bucks. HMOs were supposed to be a type of check-and-balances on doctor's diagnoses. What HMOs really do is tell you what doctor you can see and what hospitals and clinics you can go to or you can pay a great deal of money to see a doctor not in their system. A doctor can decide to drop a patient at any time from his practice if the insurance that patient holds is not to the doctor's liking. Health care in the US is a nightmare at best.

MM

8 December 2003

On "The 'war on terror' and American democracy—some ominous warnings"

Fantastic article by Patrick Martin, too bad other journalists who aren't in the Bush Crime Family's employ don't have the same courage to state the obvious. Yes, another terrorist attack on the United States could easily be used by the current administration to justify the installation of a military dictatorship. In fact, if the current liberal backlash begins to gather steam and Karl Rove determines that the Republicans won't even be able to fix next year's presidential election, it would be a "Godsend" for the neo-conservative thugs currently in power.

I am convinced that the next "terrorist" attack on the United States will occur in California. Most likely San Francisco. Why California? Two reasons.

One, the state represents the most vociferous liberal opposition to the Bush Cabal's agenda. (New York City, by the way, is a notoriously liberal city. Which may be why the Republican elite attending the upcoming convention plan to spend most of their time on a cruise ship in the bay, and why many rapture-awaiting and apocalypse-enabling "Christians" constantly allude to "God's wrath" when discussing 9/11).

Two, there's got to be a good reason why Arnold Schwarzenegger was maneuvered into the governor's mansion (although, apparently, he'll only commute to Sacramento to work and live on his palatial hacienda in Beverly Hills). My guess is that he's being groomed to be the West Coast Rudy Giuliani. I can hear him now, rallying the populace to "support President Bush's war on terror" and that there'll be "no more Mr. Nice Guy" and that soon it'll be Al Qaeda's "Judgement Day"! Of course, he'll no doubt also be selling off any compromising evidence of the attack to the Chinese before forensic tests can be done, a la the World Trade Center's concrete and steel remains.

If it wasn't so frightening, it would be hilarious.

RH

Still Canadian (at least until the new world Anschluss)

6 December 2003

On "Ashcroft defends US victimization and abuse of Maher Arar"

It would appear that the US government has been able to thus far abuse their powers via the US Patriot Act and under the guise of fighting terrorism to send messages to the rest of the world and its own citizens: No one is safe from the iron fist of this government. It is a wonder that Tommy Thompson is able to sleep nights. The shameless disregard for even basic human rights, here and abroad by the US government, should be a wake-up call for all of us who believe in the rule of law. No one, not even the US government and its participants, are above the law. They may think they are, but there will be a day of reckoning and accountability. In the meantime, real people suffer real pain and deprivation of personal liberties. It is a wonder that the Canadian government just made small talk and excuses about the abduction and transportation of one of its citizens after the brazen lies of Mr. Ashcroft. Where is their outrage?

KK

Boynton Beach, Florida

4 December 2003

On "Friedman of the New York Times attacks London anti-Bush protest"

The last two paragraphs of this article have summed up my feelings and beliefs so perfectly. I don't hold all writers who work for the *Times* to task, but this Friedman fellow is, in effect, in a class with Lieberman, another Republican in a Democrat's suit...

The article was also very tastefully put forth, with an eloquence and yet a simplicity not often seen ... again, bravo on all accounts!

BS

2 December 2003

On "Israel: Air Force pilots reject participation in targeted assassinations"

Wonderful article. The broadcast on last Tuesday's "60 Minutes" was equally wonderful. Finally the state of Israel is being exposed for the racist imperial project it is. Many liberal American Jews have had their voices kidnapped by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). That factor has produced the diplomacy/politics of cowardice. AIPAC has brought to bear pressure in the form of vicious publicity and mountains of money against any voice simply calling for even handed behavior in the Mid East. They are termed anti-Semitic and politically slaughtered. I speak primarily of Cynthia McKinney, but there have been many others. The basis of AIPAC and their hit men, like Americans for a Safe Israel, is the spiritual purity of Israeli Jews. The pyrrhic victory of the settlements is their mere existence. There is no basis for these centers of colonial brutality outside of the unending US flow of billions for war machines.

Perhaps this crack in Israeli "solidarity" is the beginning of the end of this seemingly intractable problem, and source of a monumental political destabilization and violence in the world today.

Peace,

SC

4 December 2003

On "Spain: Congress belatedly honours victims of Franco"

Dear Vicky,

A fine article which punches holes in the web of lies and hypocrisy spun by left and right in Spain to mask the continuity of the state in the transition from Franco's dictatorship to the constitutional monarchy of today. None of Franco's murderers and torturers were brought to justice and remained in their posts in the army, police, judiciary, civil service. His political henchmen participate in parliament today, as you point out.

I would like to add another element to those mentioned in the article: that King Juan Carlos gained his legitimacy with the help of the Communist Party when he did a deal with Franco's generals at the time of the attempted or staged coup perpetrated by Tejero and these generals on 23 February 1981.

It was then that Santiago Carrillo, the Communist Party leader and former national secretary of the Stalinist youth organisation during the civil war, came out in support of the monarchy. He completed a trajectory of Spanish Stalinism which had already been apparent before the fall of Franco's regime in CP documents such as "Después de Franco, qué?" which already preached conciliation, notably with the Catholic Church.

The mass demonstration at the time in support of Juan Carlos organised by the PSOE and the CPE was designed to put a stop to the aspirations of all those youth and workers who had fought for the end of Francoism to be the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism in Spain and the establishment of a socialist and egalitarian society.

TS

4 December 2003

On "Michael Jackson's tragedy"

How refreshing to read comments in response to David Walsh's article by some ordinary Americans fed up and disillusioned by the media frenzy surrounding Michael Jackson. Here in the UK, after the initial few days there are no more headlines for the time being, just one or two articles. But the American slant on the main news channels is frightening, bearing out Jermaine Jackson's comment that Michael is undergoing a modern-day lynching. That Mr. Walsh showed calm reflection and people have responded favorably to his insight is gratifying. My only wish is that such an attitude and approach is adopted by those who have the greatest influence. Alas, the power brokers will continue to have their own agendas and you can be sure they do not include "fair and balanced" reporting (to quote one network), let alone a dispassionate take on all the known facts and full discussion on the wider context as Mr. Walsh has so aptly reported.

Thank you to David and to all of your comments.

IH

3 December 2003

Thank you for writing such a thoughtful piece on the Michael Jackson case. The way the media has been behaving has made me feel sick to my stomach. Michael Jackson is a person, but it seems like no one wants to consider that. I appreciate such a well written article!

Best Regards,

HW

Sweden

3 December 2003

Dear David Walsh

I thoroughly enjoyed reading your article on Michael Jackson. I am teaching a high school media course and will be using this article for discussion and analysis. It raises the meaning of culture and values in American society. My husband, who is an editor for CBC disclosure, had remarked during Bush's visit to England about the front-page media hype about Michael Jackson in place of the demonstrations in England about Bush's visit.

Sincerely,

G

6 December 2003



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