

Letters from our readers

21 January 2004

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

On “Bush promises the Moon (and Mars) but offers only rhetoric”

Why should it surprise anyone the Bush Administration wants to shut down any real scientific research being done by NASA? After all, the information being learned from *Hubble*, *Galileo*, and other such projects flies in the face of the creationists to whom Bush panders for support. Good science has no place in this administration.

MZ

20 January 2004

On “Alan Bates (1934-2003)—a key figure in British drama”

I have gone over the article several times, and perhaps I'm missing something, but I didn't see any mention of a movie that Alan Bates starred in called “King of Hearts.” I think it came out around 1964, or thereabouts. I was surprised that it wasn't mentioned. It has always been one of my favourite movies, and the first of his that I saw. It would be a pity if hardly anyone has ever heard of it.

GS

19 January 2004

To the Editor:

I enjoyed your article on Alan Bates tonight. I am surprised that you did not include, in your discussion of his many films, *King of Hearts*. It was released in 1967 as a dark comedy, about the insanity of war, set in World War I France. Its message was relevant to the nation then, and would speak volumes about us today. Alan Bates, who looked very much the part of an innocent British soldier in the film, was excellent. If you haven't seen it yourself, I highly recommend it.

Sincerely,

JW

On “More of the big lie that ‘socialist realism’ emerged from Soviet revolutionary art”

Praise to Marianne Arens and Sybille Fuchs for their accurate and objective analysis. There is a great amount of bourgeois culture that generalizes socialism confusing it with various other permutations/contaminations/distortions thereof. This article allows the reader to discern the true flavor of the avant-garde (and other) art that was greatly promoted and sponsored after 1917, and surely until Lenin's death, from the degeneration of the bureaucracy-controlled Stalinist regime that precluded the freedom and support of artistic expression Russians had enjoyed in those years following Red October. Thank you.

MM

Los Angeles

18 January 2004

Dear Sir:

In his January 17 article on Bush's visit to Atlanta and his (Bush's) usurping for strictly political purposes the attempt to honor a fallen man of the people (“US: Protesters jeer Bush in Atlanta on King's birthday”), David Walsh quotes this fascist as saying “America will never be intimidated by a bunch of thugs and assassins...” Fortunately, the hypocrisy of that statement was not lost on me.

America is being intimidated by a bunch of thugs and assassins. They live in Washington, DC, and their names are Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld and

Ridge, among others. Bill Vann, in his article titled “*New York Times* covers up for lies on Iraq war,” included a chilling paragraph in which he quoted a postwar, jail cell interview with Herman Goering: “Naturally, the common people don't want war, neither in Russia nor in England, nor for that matter in Germany. That is understood. But, after all, it is the leaders of the country who determine the policy and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy or a fascist dictatorship.... All you have to do is tell them that they are being attacked, and denounce the peacemakers for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in any country.” We are today subjected to this same attitude, this selfsame arrogance by this murderous, morally bankrupt and self-serving regime that has seized power in America. Why cannot the majority of Americans see this frightening parallel?

One of the advantages of being “old” is that one gains (or should have gained) a certain perspective. Only after one has lived through the McCarthy era, the revolutionary 1960s when some of us first tasted the power of the people and civil disobedience and the ensuing Reagan years (when we learned, once again, that there was only an elite “ruling class” and then “the rest of us”), can one truly understand the incredible threat a power-mad individual such as Bush poses to social equality and a free and democratic way of life.

I learned a great deal about myself and my own mindset when I was in the process of deciding whether I wanted to sign up for your newsletter. I found the WSWWS through a link that referred to another article written by Mr. Walsh and had just typed in my email address, my mouse poised to click the “submit” button, when I found my finger frozen. I became afraid.

Afraid of the possible repercussions and retribution from my own government and its henchmen. Afraid of showing up on somebody's list as an “enemy of the state.” It was then I realized that to do nothing would make me as much of a sellout as the rest of my generation and that no man should allow a government (any government) to control their actions through fear and intimidation. I thank you for giving me the strength to keep fighting.

Keep up the good works.

GH

17 January 2004

Letter to the editors at *World Socialist Web Site*:

I would like to thank you sincerely for your excellent ongoing international web site coverage of the notorious SIEV X tragedy in waters off Australia which killed 353 asylum-seekers, in particular for your latest article by Jake Skeers as drawn to my attention by a colleague: “Alleged ‘people smuggler’ jailed in Egypt—Australian government continues cover-up of refugee deaths,” 16 January 2004

The article was excellently researched and I cannot find any fault with it from a factual point of view. I would only add that I welcome the Australian Labor Party's continuing efforts, along with other Opposition Parties in the Australian Senate, to maintain a degree of pressure on the government over SIEV X. Obviously I would welcome it if the ALP said even more about SIEV X, but I am grateful for what they are doing now.

I and my colleagues could not keep this issue alive on our own. Every

bit of news coverage, Internet coverage and political support helps.

Thanks again,

TK

16 January 2004

On “Afghanistan’s loya jirga convened to rubber-stamp an anti-democratic constitution”

To: P. Symonds,

Thank you for your kind attention to the situation of one of the world’s most suffering nations—Afghanistan. Your article of 18 December 2003 is the most realistic and educating compared to those who see Afghanistan only through the eyes of CNN, BBC and other US and British media and CIA-financed Afghan radio TV and newspapers. I hope I and many others who liked your recent article will be able to read more of these on a regular basis.

Your faithful,

NK

16 January 2004

On “The New York Times whitewashes Bush’s lies about Iraq”

Now that the US administration has found nothing resembling arms of mass destruction existing in Iraq, what are they waiting for to move out? They said they were not at all interested in the oil or natural resources of that country, why are they still remaining there? Do they just want to repair the havoc they have caused through their bombing? People know better than what is being published by the media. We all know that some of the citizens, a minority I hope, are stuck into a web of patriotism and an almost total political illiteracy (the administration knows too darn well how to exploit this weakness in human beings). I still believe that a majority of the US citizens are also aware of the reasons behind their government’s reasons to invade Iraq. It is oil. I am almost 100% certain that they will be in Iraq until the oil reserves are exhausted, and then, what will happen? They will leave because there will be no longer any interest to stay there, whether democracy is established or not. Do we think for one minute what will then happen to these poor Iraqis? I know that the US administration does not give a hoot.... This also applies to the United Kingdom.

JV

15 January 2004

You are right on target! The *Times* always supported this war. Because the reasons given were so flimsy, they rarely directly endorsed it, but really no pieces appeared that pointed out that it was flagrantly illegal to attack a country that was no threat to us. They had countless articles about how bad Hussein was—we had articles on actions taken before the first Gulf War and it was treated as news. I had never seen before a case where actions taken before a first war could be used to justify a second war 12 years later. After the war, not only the Judith Miller scandal but also the fact that they never covered the Bush statement that we went to war in Iraq because they would not let the inspectors in. That was made I believe on August 14 and was even on the White House page. It certainly is newsworthy and has been picked up again in a new variant. The White House is now saying we went to war because Saddam Hussein refused to abide by UN resolutions.

Keep up the good work.

DH

New York

15 January 2004

Tens of thousands of Shiites marched Monday to demand elections. Isn’t that what the Bushes wanted? These people want democracy, but Bush—our court-appointed president—says they’re not ready.... (BBC said that is just smoke, because Bush wants to break the Shiites up; you know, re-districting ... if it works in Texas, why shouldn’t it work in Iraq?)

Why isn’t it required that US Airways protect all employees’ retirement funds? Certainly US Air should care about the employees above everything else. As it turns out they didn’t.... It appears the airline is going under, so why isn’t the government requiring them to pay up to their employees concerning the retirement funds? But instead, for instance, in my case they reduced my income by 55 percent. The retirement funds should have been 100 percent insured. IBM, for instance, has a separate account of one billion just for that reason.

On “Schwarzenegger budget to slash health and education in California”

Dear editor,

I was so sickened by this latest news I had to write you.... My heart goes out to the good people of California. I remember reading about Schwarzenegger’s triumphant pre-election horn-blowing about how he was “gonna weed out the deadwood” and focus on taking care of education and health care in California. How he was going to take care of the little “nobodies,” i.e., the working man and woman that really run the economy, busting their asses day in and day out only to scrape by and be systematically shafted by their government.

How many faces does this guy (Arnold) actually have? He’s as phony as a three-dollar bill! How has “democracy” become such a one-way street for politicians and their unbelievable lies? I propose we rename the position of politician to “poli-liars,” or maybe “mortician.”

I don’t claim to know how the health care system works in the US, but in Canada if I need to go in for surgery, I am supposed to sign a waiver stating that I will not hold the surgeon responsible if something “goes wrong.” The analogy here is, Bush, Arnold, Campbell (our “Republican” premier in BC) and any and every other politician for that matter (it would seem) should be signing their names to some legislature stating that if they say one thing in their platform and do another when/if elected, i.e., don’t even bother to work at what they pledged to do, (which IS what gets them their elected position), they are GONE! How long will the rich keep getting richer and the poor people (actual human beings with a ground level understanding of the economy) keep paying for it and getting beat down?

These incredibly rich people who appear to be the sole beneficiaries of lying underhanded two-faced political agendas should be obliged to donate at least 20 percent of their yearly earnings directly to all the programs that Arnold is now proposing to cut. (Oh yes, Arnold included.)

Regards,

RM

British Columbia, Canada

17 January 2004



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