Letters from our readers

20 February 2004

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

On "Protest planned over US killing of journalists in Iraq"

I read the article posted on February 14 about the US attack on the hotel where journalists were staying. As I watched what was some very carefully tailored news coverage of the incident, it became obvious that everyone reporting this had missed the whole point.

Just before the invasion began, there was concern by the media about their level of protection with regard to their transmission sites. What they were told by the administration was that there would be no special consideration given to media sites (dish transmitters and such), and that their ground equipment might very well come under attack since a pilot would have no good way to know if the dish observed on the ground was not part of a tracking system.

I never believed this crap for a minute, because broadcast sites operate on different frequencies, and the signature emitted by these sites is not of a military/hostile nature. What was abundantly clear from day one was that the Pentagon did not want ANY media in Iraq that they did not control completely. Why would that have been a problem unless this invasion was intended to be kept out of the public's eye, save for the carefully edited releases by Gen. Franks?

As all this finally comes to light, thanks to the many leaks in Washington, I have to wonder if the administration's attempts to suppress the media are an attempt to cover up not just a flawed and inhumane military incursion, but to keep from being revealed what many suspected from the beginning, that Iraq had no active WMD inventory, and that there was no liaison between Hussein and bin Laden. This makes the whole justification for the invasion bogus, and only supports the growing suspicion that what Bush meant by "regime change" had less to do with getting rid of Hussein than it did with putting the fear of God into the entire region.

I find it curious that all these Al Qaeda terrorists were not even in Iraq until we were, and probably if we pulled out tomorrow, so would they.

I am writing this with the thought in mind that if you want to do a little backtracking on the issue of the media in Iraq, it might prove interesting to do some digging into the position taken by the administration, for clearly, their statements to the media about their being targeted "accidentally" were meant to intimidate and frighten them to the point they would not even want to be in the country, which begs the question of "Who really is the enemy in Iraq?"

Sincerely,

RR

16 February 2004

"A convenient letter from an Al Qaeda terrorist" by James Conachy brings up the possibility that such a letter could have been concocted by US intelligence. There is an old saying, "If you are walking down a country road and see a turtle on top of a fence-post, someone put it there." When was the last time "top-secret" information about enemy combatants was made public? We won't even let people held in dog-cages in Cuba see a lawyer, but we publish letters from them when politically advantageous?

PK

17 February 2004

On "Oregon faces deep cuts in schools, health and safety"

Keep up the good articles. I really love the informative information you bring. You tell us the stuff no one else in the media has the guts to report.

By the way, I think that Oregon is an experiment in how far costs and spending can be cut. If it proves not successful, then the rest of the nation will not be cast with the same burden.

But who knows, the entire US system is still "just an experiment."

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A fellow reader,
SR
Los Angeles, CA
16 February 2004

On "US: Over 100,000 job cuts announced in January" *and* "SEP candidate Bill Van Auken: "Iraq war's wounded—an American tragedy and national disgrace"

Dear David,

Your report on job losses in the US is confirmed by what I have learned from my brother. He works for an international machine tool manufacturing company in Ohio. Over the last three years, the company has laid off hundreds of workers and extended the work hours of remaining staff to at least 10 hours a day, sometimes six days a week, to maintain the level of production. Since the war in Iraq, they have called some, but not all, of the laid-off workers to meet production demands.

Last year, my brother reported a rumor going around the Ohio plant that it might be closed and all production moved to Singapore. This hasn't happened as of this writing, ironically because of new military product orders since the war in Iraq began. But I have no doubt, and my brother shares this view, that the "rumors" about the plant closing were promulgated purely to intimidate the workers in the Ohio plant as to any criticisms on their part about the added workloads after the major layoffs. By the way, these additional hours were not accompanied by any increase in pay. The workers are meant to be thankful that they still have jobs, and by inference to direct their thanks to the Bush war machine.

On the subject of the hidden wounded from the war in Iraq, my brother also tells me that he personally knows one family that had all three sons sent to Iraq. One lost a leg, another suffered severe burns, and a third sustained a head injury that has resulted in permanent brain damage. Although the major media has ignored the subject of casualties in Iraq, if Northeast Ohio is any example, the families and friends of the maimed and dead certainly are aware of the situation as regards people in their own communities. No doubt they feel isolated in their suffering because the corporate media continues to support the administration's blackout on news about the true costs of this illegal war in injured and maimed young men and women, the majority of whom are from the working class and who originally joined the military in order to get an education and health benefits not otherwise obtainable. They need to be assured that theirs is not a freak circumstance or a matter of plain bad luck but, on the contrary, that they share the experience of welcoming home battered and shredded young people with thousands of families across the country.

The *World Socialist Web Site* is doing a great service in presenting the truth of the situation, thereby enabling its readers to understand that they are not exceptions and that the true cost of the war in Iraq is once more on the backs of the working class, and that they are being lied to and manipulated by a bloodthirsty and greed-obsessed administration and its supporters, the corporate elite, for whom no amount of blood or money is ever enough.

CZ
San Francisco
14 February 2004

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