

# Letters from our readers

14 April 2004

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

On "Shiite uprising erupts against US occupation of Iraq"

Dear James Conachy:

Thanks for your clear and passionate account of the sequence of events leading up to and beyond the Shiite uprising of the last three days. No surprise that the corporate media (including such propaganda stalwarts like the BBC) have tried their utmost to downplay the extent and significance of the uprising. It's good to know you guys are still around, bringing out the truth.

Thanks again and keep up the good work.

GM

6 April 2004

On "Stop the war on the Iraqi people"

Dear WSWWS editor,

I wish there was a way to let the Iraqi people know that there are millions of Americans like me, who did not vote for Bush, are totally against Bush's war in Iraq, and feel anguish for the Iraqi people and their awful situation. I am ashamed of the USA now, because of the Bush administration's hostile words and actions. The Iraqi people must be made aware of the fact that not all Americans deserved to be hated by Muslims and Islamic groups. I feel sick to my stomach when I read the news and think about what Bush has done, is doing, and will continue to do unless he is stopped on November 2, 2004. Even then, the damage the Bush administration has done to Iraq and the Iraqi people is inexcusable, unbelievable and irreversible. There is not a day that passes when I don't feel angry, helpless and sad. I appreciate your informative articles and hope they are educating the misinformed, uninformed and ignorant.

Sincerely,

KM

7 April 2004

On "Defend the Iraqi masses"

Dear Sir:

Today when I visited the *Al Jazeera* web site I saw about one dozen photographs of little babies killed in Fallujah. These poor young lives were snuffed out by the United States need to "avenge" the lives of its brutal mercenaries and bring "peace"?

I am utterly ashamed at what my country has done in Iraq. Tonight, when I go to sleep, the faces of those beautiful little Iraqi babies will haunt me.

One day, peace will come to the people of Iraq. As for me, I am doing my part in our democracy to work to that end. First, I will not vote for Bush. Second, I am speaking to as many people as I can (some really do not want to hear the truth) about the little babies we have brutally murdered.

I believe, and hope, that the good people in my country are starting to realize what evil we have done in Iraq. I also believe and hope that when that realization becomes clear to the honest people in my country we will do the right thing: bring our soldiers home.

Thank you.

RR

8 April 2004

Quite simply a stunning piece of work and perhaps the most courageous news article I have read on the subject.

S

8 April 2004

On "The inevitable logic of US repression in Iraq"

Dear Mr. Phillips,

You forgot to mention a small fact. The US-administration—with the help of countries like Germany—secured for itself in the run-up to the war immunity from the international criminal division. Your article suggested a predominately objective logic that leads to war crimes. But it seems that the US administration already knew a lot about that logic before they began their "humanitarian" mission in Iraq.

Best wishes,

LN

Germany

12 April 2004

On "The real lessons of Fallujah"

What is there to be said regarding Fallujah? Would the Bush administration have us believe the US is bringing democracy to the citizenry of Fallujah? Are the recent happenings in Fallujah the actions of a few "Saddam dead-enders"? The Bush administration is looking bad, really bad, on many different fronts vis-a-vis Iraq.

And now, I see postings on the various forums from right-wing extremists calling for tougher action by the US in Iraq (unbelievable!).

Ladies and gentlemen, I respectfully suggest, what is happening in Fallujah and across Iraq was very well predicted and is merely the consequence of US foreign policy towards Iraq for decades. Does it really surprise anyone that there is great resentment in Iraq towards the US military? The US Military (91 Gulf War and the current military operation) has killed tens of thousands of Iraqis (civilians and military). It's baffling that many in the US seem to believe the Iraqis would embrace the ongoing military operation in Iraq. Sigh—with just a little thought, it's not hard to understand Iraqi resentment towards the US military!

The US ignored genocide in Rwanda but felt so deeply about freeing the people of Iraq from Saddam (give me a break). It's about money/oil/power. Let's just be honest. I can't stomach any more of the lies.

JL

12 April 2004

On "Professor Chomsky comes in from the cold"

Dear David Walsh,

Excellent article. In the coming months, I think there will be even more "radical" leftists exposing themselves as supporters of the bourgeois order. In Chomsky's case it is merely a case of yet again exposing himself. I have always found him to be rather puzzling. He offers some very good critiques of the capitalist propaganda machine, yet, at the same time, he accepts that propaganda in toto concerning the October Revolution. He wallows in contradictions that he apparently cannot see. He professes sympathy and even support for the world's oppressed masses, yet at the same time gives his support to the "liberal" (?) wing of the bourgeoisie. He claims to be an anarchist, yet how many different

organizations does he belong to or support? He recognizes imperialism's need to wage war, yet he has supported those wars on occasion. And of course: An anarchist, recommending anyone to vote for anyone, anytime, in any situation?

That anyone other than youth, just awakening to political consciousness, or hermits can still think that anarchism offers any kind of sound basis on which to rest their political philosophy in this day and age completely astounds me. It signifies either complete disillusionment with humanity as a whole and the working class in particular; a conscious attempt at self-aggrandizement; or a complete lack of ability/will to exercise one's critical faculties.

That Chomsky admits to not being familiar with Marxist thought is new to me, though, only insofar as that he actually admits to it, as it is fairly obvious that whenever he discusses the Marxist movement, he is only regurgitating the drivel from the bourgeois propaganda machine.

Thank you again for yet another great piece of that rich Marxist heritage.

HR

5 April 2004

It was a very good article.

What disturbs me the most is the fact that Chomsky has a following of many thousands (those who wear Birkenstocks and those who don't) "scholars" that hang on his every word, believing that he is the ultimate source of political wisdom. This is dangerous because many will follow his support of Kerry in this anybody-but-Bush movement. His endorsement is pasted everywhere on the Internet.

I have read Chomsky for years, but I am able to pick out the pertinent information and leave the rest. Many can't do that—every word is the "truth." The article also mentions Michael Moore. In my opinion Moore's works are for the entertainment value only. He makes a lot of money "saving the world." He can afford a two-party system. He needs the status quo to sell his books and films.

I wish more people could see your articles like this.

WL

6 April 2004

Dear David,

It is sad to see that Noam Chomsky, a commentator I once greatly admired (perhaps naively) come out in support of holding one's nose and supporting the infamous "lesser of two evils." Chomsky knows better than most the true meaning of this, and by this act exerts a malign influence upon others who have admired his criticisms of United States foreign policy in the past and have come to trust him as an outspoken debunker of US imperialism. For a large number of his followers he has legitimized this noxious practice and undermined the efforts of all of us who have been attempting to explain why voting for the "lesser of two evils" is more than merely a dead end—it is actually a step backward.

Chomsky's ignorance and/or misinterpretation of history is surprising. It seems that his keen observations of history only started in the 1960s, if his opinions about the Spanish Civil War are anything to go by. The justifications certain tendencies attempt to give for the practice of supporting Democrats at all costs are pathetic and pitiful. They remind me of a child's dogged refusal to believe that there is no Santa Claus. There are ample examples in popular fiction maintaining that the clinging to these childish "hopes" and such trusting "innocence" are simple virtues we have somehow lost in this cruel world and should embrace once more to save mankind. It would seem that Professor Chomsky, in his horror at the developing catastrophe, is reaching for what he and others of his ilk consider to be a security blanket. True, it *is* wool and it *is* over their eyes.

CZ

San Francisco

5 April 2004

On "CIA briefing memo exposes Bush lies on 9/11"

Barry Grey's analysis of the Bush administration's new lies covering up its criminal gross negligence (at a minimum!) of the 9/11 failures is 100 percent on the mark! How Dubya & Co. have managed to hypnotize a large segment of the public and 99 percent of the media is beyond belief. Hope this article will be disseminated widely.

ES

Virginia Beach, Virginia

12 April 2004

Thank you for your excellent coverage. There's another document that needs to be released. It is an August 16, 2001, Federal Aviation Administration Information Circular that was mentioned in the May 16, 2002, White House Press Conference with Dr. Rice [see <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/05/20020516-13.html>].

In it the FAA issued a warning about disguised weapons. They were concerned about some reports that the terrorists had made breakthroughs in using cell phones, key chains and pens as weapons. What happened to this information circular? The American public should see this as a follow-up to the August 6 Presidential Daily Briefing.

Concerned Citizen of New York City

LZ

13 April 2004

It's interesting to note that she acknowledged the PDB warned of Al Qaeda hijacking planes, and yet the White House did nothing to prevent even that.

Since it's almost impossible to prevent a hijacked plane from being flown into a landmark building, they deliberately chose not to do what could be done to prevent 9/11: specifically, heightening air travel security.

BS

San Diego, California

13 April 2004

On "Canada: Deepening poverty and economic insecurity for working families"

Thanks for this really good article on a subject largely ignored by the Canadian mainstream media. I'm a Canadian mother of two young children and my husband is a journeyman heating and refrigeration tech. I stay home full time to be with my kids and we consider ourselves part of the "working poor."

My husband makes over \$20 an hour in his trade, but, as is common in Alberta, he's in a nonunion company. This was not too bad when the company was privately owned by the two men who started it, but it was swallowed up by a US-based corporate giant a few years back and the wages were frozen. Not only that, but the head office is continually trying to find ways to cut back on pay and benefits for the employees, while at the same time jacking up prices on their customers. They refuse to implement a pension plan or even pay the full cost of our health insurance.

We live pay cheque to pay cheque and I'm constantly trying to find ways to stretch our budget even further. My seven-year-old daughter is autistic—she's high functioning, but she needs to attend a school for special needs children. While the government funds most of this, we still have to come up with \$250 each month to send her to school.

But the scariest part, I think, is that we have a perfect example south of the border of what these inhuman "give the breaks to the rich" policies do to a society—and we're marching merrily down the same path.

Best regards,

JG

Calgary, Alberta

10 April 2004

On "Nationality, ethnicity and culture: the Guardian hosts the racist ideas of David Goodhart"

Dear editor,

Thank you for the excellent three-part article on Goodhart. The crude ideology which Goodhart seeks to dress up in respectable garb has its

counterpart in many other parts of the world.

In South Africa, Thabo Mbeki's "two nations" thesis, which posits the existence of a wealthy white nation and a poor black nation in the same country, serves a particular function, namely, an attempt to obscure class divisions by appealing to racial identity. Race is taken to be the ultimate defining feature of an individual. Thus, a wealthy black businessman, of the likes of Cyril Ramaphosa, purportedly has more in common with an impoverished farm worker than with his white counterparts in the business world.

More recently, Mbeki has posited the existence of "two economies," namely, a first world economy and a third world economy existing simultaneously in the same country. Again, this serves to obscure one of the most fundamental features of South African society—i.e., that there are not two economies or two nations, but rather that there is a massive gulf between the haves and the have-nots.

Black empowerment, which basically entails the transfer of wealth to a thin layer of politically connected individuals, rests on the same foundations. Again, it puts forward an entirely fictitious notion that the dire poverty experienced by millions on a daily basis can be overcome by such means.

The problems of extreme and chronic poverty will not be overcome by the building of "ladders" or "staircases" between the first and third world economies or by creating a class of black capitalists, but by a fundamental reorganization of society which places all wealth under the social control of the mass of working people.

Kind regards,

EG

South Africa

13 April 2004



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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