

Letters from our readers

8 May 2004

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

On “Torture of Iraqi prisoners exposed” and “Washington’s hypocrisy over Iraq torture”

Those pictures evoke the film footage of Nazi guards laughing at naked women prisoners as they were forced to run. It’s the logical outcome of having demonized an enemy in order to justify an aggressive war, whether the victims are called “*untermenschen*” or “terrorist suspects.” The “embedded” reporters certainly haven’t been digging into stories such as these. Nor do they note that Saddam Hussein used to justify his brutality by branding his victims as “thugs,” which is the exact same word that Donald Rumsfeld and others in the Bush administration are using today in order to justify new crimes against the Iraqi people.

RG

30 April 2004

Dear Mr. Van Auken,

You hit the nail on the head when you wrote, “torture is as American as apple pie.” Why stop with Iraq? Where is the outcry for the torture that occurs every day within the American correctional system? Prison guards and jailers routinely abuse inmates and detainees, inflicting injuries far worse than those suffered by the poor Iraqis. The soldier-thugs committing these overseas atrocities are most likely employed within the correctional/law enforcement industry. Why chastise the soldiers for committing acts overseas that are perfectly acceptable at home?

L

California

5 May 2004

1. No wonder Bush doesn’t want the Guantanamo Bay prisoners released—they are almost certainly being tortured as well.

2. Bush and Rumsfeld are personally responsible for the mistreatment by constantly referring to anyone who opposes US forces as “the enemy.” Such references depersonalize the people and encourage those of lower rank to treat captives as if they were less than human.

RF

6 May 2004

Editor,

Last August you ran a story about the “accidental” murder (if there is such a thing) of a journalist in an article by Mick Ingram and Mike Head entitled “US military kills another journalist in Iraq”. Only now does it appear obvious as to why a journalist snooping around a torture chamber was executed.

PK

3 May 2004

Dear Bill,

A simple note to let you know that there are many people here in the “Deep South” that are in complete agreement with you. As a Vietnam combat veteran I fully understand the horrors of war and deeply feel the presence of US troops on Iraqi soil is not only illegal but immoral. We once again sacrifice our sons in a futile attempt to expand our influence in the world and our leaders use the rhetoric of freedom to justify their actions. Are we as Americans any more or less free for having waged war in Vietnam? Are we any more or less free for waging war in Bosnia, Yugoslavia, Somalia or Iraq? I think not. Only time will reveal the true nature of this conflict and only God will one day hold accountable those whose lies have prosecuted an unjust war.

RH

Lanett, Alabama

2 May 2004

On “Marines pull back from Fallujah: a debacle for American imperialism”

Having, only moments ago, seen the pictures on *Al Jazeera* of the destroyed homes, and huddled masses waiting to return home to Fallujah, I am thoroughly disgusted at the behavior of the US military. It is all too obvious that the real intent of the US military/US ruling elite was to force the people of Fallujah into submission through the use of unbridled killing and destruction. The message to the people of Fallujah is all too clear: resist the colonial occupation and your town will be destroyed and your citizens killed.

Question: If the US ruling elite decided to turn “control” of the city over to a former Republican Guard general, why not have done that earlier in the week, *before* the US military destroyed homes/businesses and killed hundreds?

I suspect over time, the people of Fallujah will turn on each other; blaming those who chose to fight the occupiers

for causing the wrath of the US military to be brought down on the city—US Mission Accomplished (divide and conquer). In this scenario (namely, encouraging Iraqi/Iraqi internal strife) the appointment of a former Republican Guard general, to “police” the city under the supervision of Coalition Forces (read: occupiers) fits quite nicely.

Ladies and gentlemen, I respectfully submit, the “game” being played out in Fallujah, and elsewhere in Iraq, by the US ruling elite is not without historical precedent. The most cursory review of history reveals colonial powers have used the type of tactics recently witnessed.

2 May 2004

Good article on situation in Fallujah. Who is running military strategy in Iraq? Spain abandoned its base outside Najaf and US forces moved in to the fixed position. Since then, the base is under constant fire. The Iraqis allowed the Spanish to remain at the base. What idiot at the Pentagon couldn't see that? Now, the Army is forced to remain in an untenable position in a fixed place and suffer for it.

It is almost like US generals are reading Wehrmacht generals' accounts of the Russian campaign and drawing inspiration from them. Our armed forces need reforming starting with defeating the commander-in-chief in November.

TS

4 May

On “What the September 11 commission hearings revealed”

On June 1, 2001, control of the NORAD interceptor system was transferred to Rumsfeld—just weeks before the attacks. The document is on the Internet ... control transferred from Vice Admiral Fry of the Joint Chiefs to Rumsfeld. That is documented.

And lots of people who work in the bunkers of NORAD have said Dick Cheney verbally ordered them to stand down on September 11. He told them it was a drill. I haven't been able to find reportage on that, but it has been spread as fact.... Cheney's voice on the public address systems in the bunkers.

Col. John DeGrand-Pre worked for the military for decades and knows the name of the pilot who shot down the flight in Pennsylvania. He's been interviewed about it and has published a book on the topic. He claims that plane was headed for the capital, in order to disrupt the government and put us under martial law, but the general in charge of that sector violated Cheney's command and ordered the plane brought down anyway.

The Neo-Cons in the White House staged a coup on 9/11.

MS

2 May 2004

On “Washington weighs terror's impact on presidential

vote: A warning to the American people”

Dear Mr. Kay,

This is a very timely article, in view of the elections being exactly six months away—I've forwarded your piece widely and I'm urging others to do likewise. There isn't a moment to lose in making the American public aware of the real possibility of the scenarios you present coming to pass. I hope you and other fine writers at WSWs will continue to keep this specter in the spotlight in the weeks and months to come.

Warmest regards,

JG

5 May 2004

On “Sri Lankan president's call for peace talks fuels tensions in government ranks”

Dear Sir,

What an excellent piece of high quality journalism. The article was well written and carefully thought out. Thank you very much indeed for being so understanding. The reporter of the article, Mr. Ratnayake, is a truly magnificent gentleman who was so magnanimous with his thoughts and very eloquent in his expression. May your good work to mankind continue for many, many years!

Thank you once again.

Dr. S

United Kingdom

4 May 2004

On “British Columbia: State assault on hospital workers provokes mass walkouts”

Good article on British Columbia and the NDP by Keith Jones. The workers were completely sold out by the labour bureaucracy and the opposition party.

We were all ready to go and nicely organized with phone calls made, lines prepared, etc.. Then the labour bureaucracy pulled the plug late Sunday night. The media assisted to disseminate the message that the protest was over. Not as many people showed up on the lines. Transit and some schools were out for the morning. The Victoria to mainland ferry was delayed two sailings. It could have been much wider spread.

It is clear we need an alternative socialist party.

TM

4 May 2004



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