

Letters from our readers

8 December 2004

The following is a selection of recent letters to the World Socialist Web Site.

On “Ralph Nader and the Democratic election debacle”

Another manifestation of Nader’s lack of political seriousness was his reluctance to try to build an opposition movement to the two-party duopoly *between* elections. After the 2000 election it was as if Nader went into hibernation until it was time to run again. This approach (or lack of approach) catered to the liberal US idea that the touchstone of democracy is “free elections.”

GG

30 November 2004

An amazing and informative article. Class confrontation, replacing class compromise, in light of the decline of US economic dominance, is precisely what is occurring in the US, vis-a-vis the working class and the ruling elite. From my optic, the real challenge in the US is to “educate” the working-class to the mechanisms used by the ruling elite, which largely work against the interests of the working-class.

Working families making less than \$200,000 per year voting as if they were a part of the ruling elite and thereby voting *against* their own interests is indicative of a *massive* and *prolonged* propaganda campaign. The “deprogramming” to offset this propaganda campaign can only come through enlightened commentary, which the subject article exemplifies. I am reminded of a famous quote, from an unknown citizen of the former Soviet Union, when asked about Soviet propaganda: “...unlike the Americans and propaganda being fed them, at least we *know* we’re being fed propaganda...” With many in the working class working 80-hour weeks to “make ends meet,” finding time to read and comprehend the likes of subject article is at least an uphill battle. Kudos to WSWS for having the courage to fight injustices suffered by the disenfranchised working class, and for drawing the “battle lines” so articulately.

JLB

30 November 2004

Excellent piece on Nader and the reformation of the Democratic Party. It is an extremely good, succinct analysis of the historic role of the Democratic Party. I have forwarded the piece to a number of people, including my born-again Bush-voting relatives who have never understood. I gag when they keep talking about the left-leaning Democrats (the elites, the *NY Times*, etc.). My brother, bless him, calls CNN the commie news network. I suppose he is the average small businessman. More power to you. Cheers,

GB

30 November 2004

NSW, Australia

On “The inglorious exit of CBS anchorman Dan Rather”

An excellent piece. It reminds a little of the *The Insider* movie, and, specifically, the reactions of the Pacino and Plummer characters to CBS’s freeze-out of their story. When so much pressure is brought to bear by a commercial news organization on particular individual(s) in a news team, they will inevitably be forced to withdraw or resign. It parallels the BBC’s experience with Kelly and the Hutton enquiry.

MS

29 November 2004

On “International Red Cross charges systematic abuse: Bush’s ‘Torture Inc.’ at Guantanamo”

I’d like to bring to your attention an editorial by Lewis Lapham in the current edition of *Harper’s Magazine*. Regarding the torture regime the US government has installed at numerous locations throughout the globe, Lapham states that the real subject of the experiments with torture are not the prisoners themselves, per se. As you have reported many times, these individuals by and large have nothing to do with anything relating to the “war on terror.” The real subject is the American people. This

administration is experimenting with its citizenry, to see how far they may go before people rise up in revulsion at the horrors being perpetrated in their name. If this is so, we already know how far some people in this country are willing to go to allow, or even encourage, horrendous crimes. One need only look at a cross-section of daily media reports to see that a sizeable section of the elite seek to ensure that the American populace becomes increasingly indifferent to the state terror tactics of the Bush regime. The repeated calls in certain sections of the media for increased violence throughout the globe illustrate Lapham's point.

JB

3 December 2004

Arlington, VA

On "Democrats ready to confirm defender of torture as new US attorney general"

What does Bush's selection of Alberto Gonzales as the new attorney general portend for this country? I believe it signifies a very dangerous direction for the US and we must oppose it in every way that we can. We now know that the US is engaging in torture from Guantanamo Bay to Abu Ghraib, to torture flights. This cannot be allowed to continue and the appointment of Gonzales signals the clear intent of this administration to continue the ongoing abuse of prisoners.

It is not, as they have claimed, a few bad apples; rather it stems from the highest chain of command where it is authorized and condoned. Gonzales, in his memos, prepared for Bush, called the Geneva Conventions "quaint" and "obsolete." His reasoning was that if we subscribed to the Geneva Conventions, charges of war crimes could be filed, but if we simply said they do not apply, well then, no one could be held accountable. This is the advice he was giving to the president.

Even though an esteemed organization such as the International Red Cross has stated that psychological and physical torture is occurring at Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib, including stripping, forced positions, temperature extremes etc., Congress has done nothing to investigate the chain of command. Instead, they are threatening to shut off aid to any country that attempts to charge soldiers or higher-ups with war crimes!

ES

1 December 2004

Boulder, CO



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