

Letters from our readers

23 February 2005

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

On "Extraordinary security measures for Bush visit to Germany"

A friend forwarded the article to me and I must say I am not surprised that the paranoid Bush clique would take such extreme measures. No one gets even close to this warmonger unless they are screened and proper passes given by God knows how many security agencies in the US. When he travels about in the US he only meets with people who have been screened and cleared. Then, I believe the handlers make sure their lungs and voices can handle the loud screams expected in support of every word he utters, no matter how inane it may be.

The Mainz resident who said, "Only an autocrat requires this much security and protection" was correct. Bush's handlers know he is hated worldwide and I believe the extraordinary measures taken in Germany were not so much for his protection, but for his ego. He loves this, he thrives on it and it gives him a sense of power that is dangerous to the entire world.

HH

21 February 2005

Being an American and seeing daily the escapades of what we are calling a President, it is beyond my [belief] why he is allowed to enter *any* country. The money that is spent for him to strut and feed his ego could be well used for other purposes. This has to be not only one of the most hated men in the world but also one of the most cowardly and paranoid. What is so truly pathetic about the whole thing is the fact that it is not just one man, our entire government is saturated with the same type person on both sides of the aisle, Democrat and Republican, they have infiltrated every office. This was an excellent article that pretty well told the truth of the matter and what the cost was other than the dollar amount.

RD

West Frankfort, Illinois

22 February 2005

While I agree with your observation that the extraordinary level of security invoked is, in part, predicated on fear, yet I believe you lost a chance to point out some other elements of this charade. Other factors which are probably equally important are:

1. Punishment of Germany by making it "bow low" while the emperor visits.
2. Propaganda for consumption back home, i.e., showing the people just how "serious" the risk is and how dangerous the world has become for "Americans" in the person of their "representative," Bush.
3. The tyrant's version of British royal processions.
4. An indulgence of Bush's bloated sense of his own importance in the world.

TK

Edmonton, Canada

21 February 2005

On "30 years in prison for crime committed by 12-year-old"

I was at work when I heard that this boy would be in jail until he was in his mid-forties. I felt completely disgusted and, thankfully, I was not alone. That this is further indication of how depraved this society has become is without a doubt, but, I ask: what's next? How much deeper do we sink into the swamp before we manage to pull ourselves out? Are they going to start locking up eight-year-olds for fighting in school next?

After reading your article, I was left with a few other thoughts as well. This child had obviously had a very rough childhood, and much of the reasons for that, if not all, can be laid to rest at the feet of the capitalist system we live under. And then, after being warped from a young age, abandoned and medicated, he lashes out. And now, after having his childhood stolen he will be institutionalized not in a psychiatric ward where he belongs, but in the madhouse of our penal system. If he lives to be released, his mental stability will be even worse than it is now.

As for the defense: to only focus on one aspect of the child's development to the exclusion of all others, including his young age, his overall mental instability, the reasons he was on the medication to begin with, his environment and his rearing smacks of gross incompetence.

HR

Las Vegas, Nevada

19 February 2005

Wouldn't it have been simpler for the religious right to have just, "Beat the devil out of him"? What a disgrace.

PS

20 February 2005

Thanks for providing an intelligent coverage and analysis of the Chris Pittman case. So much about the decayed nature of American society is revealed in his trial and its outcome. The use by the prosecution of the word "evil" to describe a disturbed child reminds us of the simplistic understanding we Americans have of the complex and deeply-entrenched etiology of violent crime. The Zoloff issue reveals our answer to human beings (understandably) unable to cope with an alienated society: medicate them. That those involved in the processing of this youth were quick to rationalize his classification as an "adult" is nothing new, and again belies a persistent refusal of the American consciousness to place behaviors in context. The individual is assumed to be born with a God-given conscience and bottomless reservoir of willpower, and thus always capable of making the "right" decision. Our willingness to assign adult status to juveniles has

always astounded me. On countless occasions have I heard the (knee-jerk) reaction cited in your article (that adult crimes call for adult trials), even from colleagues in my university. Our criminal justice department, in fact, once put up a poster expressing concern over the recent reduction in juvenile executions in America. Such a historical and cross-cultural vacuum in academia is disturbing—did they not know we are one of the only nations on Earth that executes juveniles at all? All of this is, as you say, part of a hysterical conservative reaction to the myth that America was ever “soft on crime.” We spend more on police and prisons, per capita and in absolute dollars, than any other nation on Earth. We incarcerate the highest (or second highest, depending on the year) proportion of our population, and have in absolute numbers more people behind bars than any other nation. Soft on crime, indeed!

BB

Oklahoma

21 February 2005

On “Vote ‘no’ in Spanish referendum on European Union constitution”

“In Spain, we were late in joining the EEC; we were late in joining NATO: we must not be late in joining Europe.” “A ‘no’ vote on the European constitution is a ‘no’ vote on Europe.”

These were some of the misleading affirmations used by both the Socialist Party and the Popular Party here in Spain when asking for a “yes” vote in the referendum on the European constitution. And unfortunately, they knew what they were doing, since the Spanish population in general very much wants to be a part of Europe, and they’re afraid of doing anything that puts that at risk.

I voted “no” in yesterday’s referendum, not because I’m a Euro-skeptic, but because I believe that a united Europe is in the best interest of the people of Europe. I believe that, with the right constitution, a united Europe could return control of their lives to the sovereign masses.

I took the time to read the constitutional treaty. It is a document written by and for the corporate, political and military elite. It is a document which, when compared to the Spanish constitution of 1978 (a document that itself is far from perfect), represents several steps backwards in terms of human rights and social protection. For example, the Spanish constitution recognises the right of all people to a decent job and to decent compensation for that job; the European constitution, on the other hand, recognises only the right of the people to work, with no mention of receiving any compensation whatever for doing that work.

In short, the people of Spain were tricked into supporting a constitution that will reduce their rights and protection, by the same unscrupulous people and organisations who wrote this treaty for their own benefit.

DH

Las Rozas, Spain

21 February 2005

On “US intelligence officials play the terrorism scare card, and make a damning admission”

I am so tired of being scared, lied to and otherwise jerked around by the administration. I am about ready to go to Canada and start over even if I am 72 years old. I think Bush is losing it. He was not too bright to begin with and being the most powerful man in the

world has pushed him over the edge. He is itching to invade Syria and Iran. Not that he gives a hoot about freedom but for their oil. He made a Devil’s deal with Libya, one of the world’s worst terrorists without a word about Democracy there. I don’t know if the world can survive almost four more years of Bush. He is doing his best to bring on a nuclear war.

WL

20 February 2005

On “Bush names Negroponte as national intelligence director”

Let’s get this straight. The man who praised the rape and murder of the people of Honduras and the rest of Central and South America under Lord Reagan, gets sent to Iraq to rape and murder there. Now he is being given carte blanche to run the secret police here under the Most Holy Emperor Bush, and you think it might be bad for the American people? God have mercy upon us because Negroponte won’t.

RAV

Upper Marlboro, Maryland

20 February 2005

On “US multinationals awarded huge tax break on foreign earnings”

As I have come to understand how the world *really* works, I am not surprised at this boondoggle. All of the efforts of this and most other previous administrations has been to pump up the ailing economy, that has become ailing by allowing things such as derivatives, corporate raiding, etc. Now they want to coax the gullible into throwing their money into this mess via Social Security reform legislation!

EC

17 February 2005



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact