

Letters from our readers

9 March 2005

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

On “Judge’s family slain: Bush administration keeps silent on terrorist killings in US”

Thank you, Bill Van Auken, for your very relevant and necessary piece. Sadly, the media in general either does not get or refuses to report the facts and horrifying correlations that you highlighted in this work. If we choose to label anything an “American Taliban,” then mainstream American media would top my list.

SS
Canada
5 March 2005

Thank you for an insightful article! Having lived in DC for years, and seen the bald-faced calls from the Bushies for violence against the “Liberals,” I am surprised neither at Coulter’s words, nor at the (in)action of the Bush administration on this subject.

There has long been the double standard—pre-dating Bush and his cohorts—that what is done by those who agree with us is done for a good cause but the same thing done by our enemies is terrorism. It’s something we on the left should bear in mind. We must continue in the tradition of peaceful protest, lest we become as hateful and vile as our enemies.

CS
Portland, Oregon
5 March 2005

You state in your article about the slaying of the judge’s family that, “Had the judge and her family been targeted by Al Qaeda, there would have been an uproar in Washington, in all likelihood accompanied by another roundup of hapless Muslim immigrants.”

I beg to differ. What about the murder of the Coptic family in Jersey City? I’m pretty sure it was a hate crime, but it was not mentioned on your web site, or on any liberal web site I have seen. I hate the politics of FOX News, but that was the only channel that gave these murders any airtime.

I feel disgusted with right-wing conservatives, but I am feeling disillusioned by left-wing liberals. It seems to me that human rights is an issue only if it fits an agenda. I guess Middle Eastern Christians don’t fit the left wing’s agenda.

AB
5 March 2005

On “Canada-US frictions intensify after Ottawa balks at joining missile defence”

Thanks for that comprehensive coverage of a matter that signifies further deviance of this ruthless “stealth” president, George W. As a Canadian, however, I am truly disheartened by the behavior of our prime minister, Paul Martin. While admitting that

he is more or less hamstrung because of the inexpediency of leading a minority government, irreparable harm is committed by his vacillating on issues that call for clear conscience-driven decisions. Full and unequivocal rejection of US weaponization of the space program is what is needed to give some impetus to world opinion on this matter. Instead, what we get are seat-of-the-pants statements issued according to which way the political winds blow on any given day. Very sad—for a country that has so much to offer but is too timid to assert itself.

DJ
Edmonton, Alberta
8 March 2005

On “Australia: working class suburb under police siege”

This article is excellent. I hope the WSWS publishes more on this story. I am definitely going to use it in the classroom to show the students how the media is only presenting a heavily biased version of this affair.

JP
7 March 2005

On “Britain: house arrest legislation a fundamental attack on democratic rights”

Hazel Blears, a Blairite minister responsible for “counter-terrorism,” intensified the British ruling elite’s attacks on ethnic minorities yesterday [March 1]. In a chilling response to questions at a select committee meeting, she told MPs that Muslims will have to accept as “reality” that they will be stopped and harassed by police and security forces more often than the rest of the population.

In a comment reminiscent of an apparatchik in a police state, she casually announced that “there was no getting away from...[the fact] that the terrorist threat came from people falsely hiding behind Islam.” This weasel-like caveat failed to impress Massoud Shadjareh, chair of the Islamic Human Rights Commission, who correctly interpreted Blears’s comments as “legitimizing a backlash” against the Muslim community. Blears’s open attack on the Muslim community coincides with the increasingly reckless and sinister assault on civil liberties in Britain. The government is currently ramming anti-terrorist legislation through Parliament, legislation that will sanction house arrest for those merely suspected of terrorist offences. These measures have led to the absurd spectacle of Tory MPs protesting that these Labour measures are an attack on personal freedoms, yet have not prompted sufficient numbers of bovine Labour MP’s to vote the legislation down in Parliament.

In admitting that “some of our counter-terrorism powers will be disproportionately experienced by the Muslim Community,” the minister willfully ignored statistics showing that of the 17 people

found guilty of terrorist acts since 9/11 only 4 were known to be Muslims. Overall, police searches (really harassment) have shown a dramatic rise with just 21,500 in 2002-2003 to 30,000 in 2003-2004. The figures for searches of Muslims reveal that they are three times as likely to be searched than their white fellow-citizens compared with their percentage in the overall population.

As must be wearily acknowledged by all readers, the current escalating economic and social crisis in Britain and throughout the world means the ruling elites have to curtail citizens' rights and select easily identifiable scapegoats in an attempt to control their subjects' political and psychological consciousnesses. As the crisis rambles on and deepens, these cartoon-like attempts become more and more transparent and shabby. Thus, in just two days, a Pakistani "terror-suspect" in a piece of miraculous timing suddenly admits to security forces that three years ago he was poised to detonate a shoe bomb in a flight to America; the *Sun* newspaper headlines today with the tragic "story" of an asylum seeker drunkenly killing a white boy; and the BBC is airing a programme tonight in which undercover journalists expose the casual and brutal racism at the centre of Oakingham Aysylum detention centre.

In this kind of context, Blears's remarks take on a threatening hue, yet amidst all the other indications of increasing racism and unfreedom they barely register a dissenting voice in the British media or, indeed, government rag that is the *Guardian*.

SB
Reading, UK
2 March 2005

On "Kerry proposes 40,000 more troops, as Democrats back Bush war spending"

Thank you for your February 19 article on how John Kerry has again called for 40,000 more troops for Iraq, and on the support the Democratic Party has given this criminal war and occupation by going along with war appropriations.

I draw your attention to how the *Washington Monthly*, a liberal, pro-Democratic Party publication, has prominently published an article calling for a return to a military draft. The story is now on the *Monthly's* main page and is at <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2005/0503.carter.html>. It is filled with hawkish bilge and hot air about the need for draft to maintain the "mantle of global leadership," as follows:

"If America wishes to retain its mantle of global leadership, it must develop a military force structure capable of persevering under these circumstances. Fortunately, we know how to build such a force. We have done it many times in the past. The question is: Do we have the will to do so again?"

Once again, America's "party of the people" is in the vanguard of the frontal assault by the rich and privileged on America's working classes.

I do hope that you can find the space to comment upon this brazen-faced militaristic tract. Thank you for your many brilliantly written, impassioned articles.

LM
Jersey City, New Jersey
6 March 2005

On "London meeting presses Palestinian Authority for further

concessions"

An absolutely tremendous article. I have been keeping an eyeball on CNN Europe this week, and CNN seems to have left out most of the issues the London Conference addressed. The only real issue at the conference was how Palestinian security might better serve Israel's interests—that is, to stop all violence and resistance to the occupation. I am always astonished at the fine media coverage that WSWs provides.

RB
Malaga, Spain
5 March 2005

On "Asian tsunami: The New Zealand government's pathetic record"

You write, "Labour's response to the plight of the impoverished tsunami victims in Asia is a mirror image of its attitude towards the New Zealand working class." What attitude would that be I wonder? I know! 663,000 (admitted to) litres of pesticide dumped on the heads of the working class over a three-year span to protect the interests of non-New Zealand forestry investors.

JB
Waitakere, New Zealand
5 March 2005

On "Michigan artist sentenced to jail over mural nudity"

This would be laughable, if it were not so sickening. It is a combination of ignorance, prudity and downright stupidity of the highest order. That the United States has the highest rates of teen pregnancy, the highest rates of sexual mental dysfunction, and some of the highest rates of STD infection in the civilized world is due in large part to the shame attached to the physical form and the hysterical attitudes that surround it. The people involved in prosecuting this court case make me feel sick.

RH
4 March 2005



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