

Letters from our readers

15 April 2005

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

On "New York Times joins witch-hunt of Columbia University professors"

Hello, your article was very good and important. Today's media is completely in the hands of those who perpetrate the monetary, imperialistic and aggressive behavior of the right-wing segment of the society. Sometimes, they behave almost as the propaganda machine of the Nazis, spreading warped info about different conflicts across the globe and completely disregarding any *progressive* developments, in Latin America and other regions.

So, keep up the good work on informing, at least through the internet, as many people as you can. Sooner or later, these monetary vultures will have to be kept accountable for all the misdeeds, deaths and environmental slaughter that their "investment" economics is doing.

DK

9 April 2005

Good article! Contains much background I was not aware of. This witch-hunt could presage others. In this instance, it can be seen that the elite are sanctioning oppression against those who "do not toe the line on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict." However, the right has also expressed interest in "going after" any professors who do not espouse their political agenda. This may be only the first step. Even those who may not agree with these Arab professors should remember words of a German who lived through the Holocaust. The author escapes me. He said first they came after one group, and he said nothing, then they came after another, and he said nothing, and so on. When they came after him, there was nobody left to say anything.

TR

9 April 2005

It is sickening, but only a confirmation that the *New York Times* bends over to the most reactionary forces of our society, especially Zionist triumphalists. One syllable on Israel that is not an obeisance brings condemnation and, in the case of Dr. Massad, real threats. If some nutball got wind of this operation (as some certainly have already), the professor's life could be in danger. The *Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* are adamantly pro-Israel, and even support that ghetto wall the Jews of Israel have built. It is a sad state when liberalism has fallen into such a dishonorable state. I suppose it was inevitable when the lie of

Zionism was used to justify the mass expulsion of the Palestinians from their own land and the continuing slaughter and degradation of the Arabs over half a century. But the process of dehumanization continues, of course. Now, Jewish airmen and soldiers are refusing to be debased any further: they will not fight in civilian areas, especially over and in disputed lands. The rest who accept are like slaveholders who fancy themselves Christians. The illusory ideal does not hold and eventually must be abandoned.

Thank you so much for the clarity you have brought to this issue.

SC

Los Angeles, California

10 April 2005

To quote Sonny Bono, "And the beat goes on." It was easy to attack Prof. Churchill, for he stood up and shouted, the result being the University of Colorado has to find ways of atonement for having someone of this type on the faculty. They have and will continue to cave in.

It was easy to attack Prof. Massad at Columbia, for he spoke of a controversial subject. Columbia has to atone for having someone such as this on their faculty. They have and will continue to cave in.

Each is a not very subtle reminder that the idea of thinking, of speaking, of questing for something other than the status quo is no longer allowed in this country. There is no "future when questioning will not be allowed," it is not allowed now. The time is not "coming," it is here.

Our "culture," our "society," our "humanity" have been taken from us, and we have kept quiet as our masters knew we would. Our masters demonstrated their understanding in the election of '00. They chose the dumbest, most incompetent fool they could find and put him in the White House, demonstrating their complete and total contempt, not of democracy, but of humanity. To show that this was not some fluke and that they could do it whenever they desired, they set up the 2004 election. They give a choice between a Texas drawl and a Boston accent. To their great entertainment, it didn't make a bit of difference.

RAV

9 April 2005

On "Western powers dispute Mugabe's victory in Zimbabwe poll"

I am not a socialist by any stretch of the imagination, nor do I subscribe to many of the opinions expressed in your web site. Nevertheless, I must compliment you on the thoughtful and informed analysis present in your reports. I specifically have in mind a recent piece on the Zimbabwe elections, where besides being very informative, you do not fall prey to the stupid dualism of praising Mugabe just because you dislike his opponents (something many people with more “centrist” views do). Just one small complaint. Your coverage of my country is quite sporadic, and often shallow. In particular I would like to hear your views on the recent massacre (29 dead) in a favela near Rio, probably committed by off-duty policemen.

BM

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

13 April 2005

Emphasis should be placed on the recollection by Zimbabweans of the atrocities committed by the white Ian Smith regime on the people of Zimbabwe. Western powers supported Ian Smith during his reign of terror. Those same powers support the MDC. Zimbabweans should avoid any influence of the West in their political affairs.

CJ

13 April 2005

I liked your informative article on the election in Zimbabwe. However, I think one bit of information re the performance of the opposition should be mentioned: Mugabe gets to choose or appoint 30 of the 120 seats himself. Although the opposition didn't do well, omitting this info made it look even worse.

JM

Hamburg, Germany

13 April 2005

On “Washington sought to suppress UN report on progress of democracy in Middle East”

Nowhere does the report state that the Iraq war was illegal. What is mentioned about Iraqi suffering and loss of freedom is what Arabs read every day in their newspapers or see on satellite TV. The formulation you quote in your article—“As a result of the invasion of the country, the Iraqi people have emerged from the grip of a despotic regime that violated their basic rights and freedoms, only to fall under a foreign occupation that increased human suffering...”—is clever by half. It does not condemn the invasion and implicitly endorses the Bush administration's excuse of having gone to war to “liberate” the Iraqis. The authors of the report are mostly ex-socialists or ex-nationalists, with the emphasis on “ex.” They are firm believers in representative democracy, although it has let, for example, the people of the UK and Italy down in that their governments paid no heed to the anti-war sentiments of the majority. The authors are staunch converts to the neo-liberal state, and consider it to the Arabs' advantage to participate in the globalization project without reference to the likely impact on the majority of Arabs living in abject poverty. The report in no way rocks the boat, and the earlier reported disagreement

could only have been a storm in a teacup. After all, what do you expect from a document funded, at least partly, by Gulf petrodollars?

BK

9 April 2005

On “Muted response in Canberra as Australian woman faces death penalty in Indonesia”

It is absolutely disgusting, the blatant disregard for her and every other falsely accused citizen's human rights. I agree drug dealers should be punished, but based on the information given in the case, it seems Corby was unaware of the drugs in her bag. She has been proven guilty on assumption and is given no opportunity to prove herself innocent.

What is the international community doing if her government isn't doing anything to protect her?

CW

6 April 2005

On “Australian economic slowdown undermines Howard government”

I am studying economics at high school and currently completing year 12. Over the last couple of days, I have been researching Australia's large current accounts deficit. Your article was by far the best that I have seen. It had all of what the others had and more—all relevant points relating to the high CAD and intelligent comments. Thanks for a good read.

LC

Ballarat, Australia

12 April 2005

On “A culture at the end of its rope, continued”

Despite programmatic differences with the WSWS, it still has to be said that David Walsh is without doubt in my mind one of the best, if not the best, film critic in the United States today. *Sin City* is more than deserving of the shellacking he gave it. Go get 'em, David.

MH

Seattle, Washington

13 April 2005



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