Letters from our readers

20 April 2005

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

On "Rumsfeld's mission in Baghdad: keeping Saddam's secret police in power"

Thanks for the enlightening article. Without the WSWS I don't know how I could possibly find out what is really happening. It occurs to me that Washington is playing the old colonial game of "divide and conquer," or, in this case, "play one side against the other to maintain control." The British used to play this game. It appears Washington is playing the Sunnis and Baathists against the Shia to stay on top of the situation. First, they defeat the Baathists, ostensibly to free the Shia and Kurds. Then they silently empower Baathists to crack down on dissidents. You can bet that if the Shia defy them (the US), they will use these Baathists to crack down on the Shia. They don't have to worry about the Kurds, who seem slavishly in their imperial pockets, on the model of the Israelis.

TR
13 April 2005

Good writing and thinking. I live in Lancaster County, PA, home of the northern bump of the Bible Belt. Here they fall for everything in the right-wing manure pit. It's lonely!!

DK
13 April 2005

Democracy is looking up in Iraq! The people are protesting! The people are assisting their new democracy to respect the people's right to assembly. Hurrah for democracy! Of course, now that the stated goal is being achieved, our own prince of darkness, Rumsfeld the Ruthless, has rushed to the scene of imminent democracy and thrown his vampire cape over rash talk and rasher action of democratic application of a free people. The free choice so loudly proclaimed as a goal of the US intervention is in danger of being implemented in ways the US finds unacceptable. So much so, in fact, that Rumsfeld's utterances are easily discernable as the threats they are: don't let all this democratic talk go to your head and remove "our" people from the prime government posts where we installed them, or else. Hurray for democracy! Our soldiers, used for profit and amassing enormous economic assets for a few glutted corporations, are well on their way home. Welcome home to the men and women who did their duty with sincerity and faithfulness in spite of the aims of the greedy overlords who control most aspects of the military. Welcome home to democracy!

KS
Duluth, Minnesota
12 April 2005

On "Pope John Paul II: a political obituary"

It's good to know there are still people of reason around who are able to see things as they are. Thanks for the essay. Yes, John Paul II has done many evil things and failed to do the many good things he could have done by virtue of his authority. And yet the corporate media, including the BBC, took advantage of Mr. Wojtyla's long agony and extended burial to treat us to a marathon macabre show designed to convince the less critical among us that he was truly a saint.

The whole charade reminds me of the embarrassing spectacle made of the burial of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran about 15 years ago, in the course of which the poor ayatollah's body fell out of the coffin and onto the faithful carrying it. The only essential difference was that in the pope's case, they managed to restrain the faithful enough to prevent a repetition of a similar occurrence. Keep up the good work!

RT
Germany
13 April 2005

Thanks for the only honest obituary I've come across on this now deceased cleric. I am so sick of the mass media's monotonous claim that "the Pope helped bring down Communism." How can you bring something down that never existed in the first place? Communism, as Marx articulated so well for those who care to understand, is the freedom of man, the freedom of our species to live and work as we please. Hmmm... maybe, ironically, the media's on to something after all.

HC
13 April 2005

Thank you for your excellent article on Pope John Paul II. It must be a sad sign of the times if, after the nauseatingly sycophantic drivel propagated by the media about this

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geriatric reactionary, the coverage of Charles and Camilla's nuptials (almost) came as a breath of fresh air!

RT
Cheshire, UK
14 April 2005

On "US Marshals, local police stage nationwide mass arrests"

Good point Bill, but this is not a sign of anything other than what is to come! If unemployment continues to rise, the war does not improve—not for me or you or even the Iraqis, but for the US government—then you will see a dramatic rise in violence in the US. The actions of the US government alone will be the cause of the calamity, and we cannot provoke it any further or make its furor any worse. All we can do is, to do right and love thy neighbor.

MG
16 April 2005

On "Israel: government of provocateurs denounces settler provocation in Jerusalem"

Sharon's plan, which Rick Kelly outlines extremely well, is to create the Greater Israel along the lines of the Zionist nation state of Theodore Herzl, the "Judenstaat," to get its full, original racist "Volkstaat" flavor. Only, Sharon is a serial bungler. His plans are always magnificent and bold, but end up doo-doo, as in Lebanon, where Israel was forced eventually into a series of humiliating retreats.

So far, the coast is clear. Settlements will expand and walls built to surround the Palestinians, whom Sharon will squeeze and demoralize into submission, or else loosen a Fallujah solution upon. Bush and his cohorts are ready to provide cover. However, the article seems to suggest smooth sailing for Sharon; at any event it does not emphasize considerable obstacles that are sending shudders through the Zionist establishment. Deep fissures have opened in Israel that are likely to unsettle the Zionist state and ruin Sharon's dream. For instance, Sharon has to face a very restive working class with many damaging strikes barely resolved and new ones on the horizon. His government's offensive against the working class is stalled by an inability to pass the budget after a falling-out-among-thieves level of political debate.

All this is happening while the country opened itself to the unhappy consequences of the capitalist looting of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Gangsters and oligarchs increasingly rule Israel's politics and finance, a form of perverted financial globalization. Zionist elders and sons, Sharon not excluded, have not only been ankle deep at the trough, but worse, following the example of their cousins in Kyrgyzstan, Georgia and Ukraine, gangsters took leading positions for themselves and their children in the Zionist state's government and political life.

But that's not all. Sharon has to put down an uprising of brownshirts, the settlers, and appease enormous medieval-minded but politically astute religious communities, whose idea of the Jewish state corresponds rather well with those of Iranian Mullahs for an Islamic state. Jewish Jerusalem is increasingly dominated by the "yeshiva bokers," the caftan wearing ultra-orthodox who have their own political agenda and enormous claims on an increasingly strained state budget. What the Shiite are to Bush, these folks are to Sharon, as may be witnessed soon if a Gay Pride Parade proceeds in Jerusalem.

I need not add the trouble of finding and financing the settlement of lost Jewish tribes, keeping younger American Jews interested in the Zionist project, or dealing with the social disorder caused by failing welfare, health and education services. Most especially, Sharon must find ways to finance his big plan at a time when his needs compete with the very expansive other projects of his American sponsor all over the world. I think Israel will soon be shaken from an unexpected direction: its own Jewish people. The Judenstaat looks powerful, but remains, as Trotsky had predicted, a "deathtrap for Jews." Sharon is not home free.

A.L.
Toronto, Ontario
15 April 2005

On "The orgy continues: American CEOs pocket billions more in pay and perks"

Great Article. The old phrase, "Isn't that a bit excessive" has become meaningless.

AM
Sanford, Maine
14 April 2005

On "A culture at the end of its rope, continued"

David, thanks for seeing this slop so I won't be tempted to. My condolences for the time you spent.

JS
14 April 2005

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