

Letters from our readers

12 May 2005

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

On “Britain: The May 5 general election and the failure of Labourism”

You write, “The struggle for socialism depends upon making a political break with Labourism and building a new leadership, capable of uniting workers internationally against a ruling elite and a system of exploitation that operates on a global basis.”

During the New Zealand Labour Party’s aerial pesticide spraying campaign (January 2002—May 2004), I used to wake up with acute sinus pain and a tight band across my chest from breathing difficulties. I literally felt the pain of betrayal in my heart. I hope workers do unite to create a more caring society that defeats the system based on exploitation you write about.

JB

Auckland, New Zealand

5 May 2005

On “Britain: the myth of Labour’s economic success”

Are people ever going to learn that there is a time for everything, being it a refrigerator, washing machine, car, political party, etc., that it is to be deposited in the junkyard as scrap and either to be melted down, or turned in to compost like British political parties should be. All over the world people keep scrounging in the political junk yard trying to kick-start parties that have long ago outlived their usefulness. With electronic manipulation, the same as in America and many other countries of recent, there is not a shred of doubt in my mind that Tony Blair will elect himself for another term in office.

As always,

FBR

Thailand

4 May 2005

On “One year since the torture revelations at Abu Ghraib: Mistrial in reservist’s court martial”

I read with an audible gasp yesterday’s newspaper headlines about the mistrial. My questions (boiled down to “what the heck? What will happen?”) were not answered upon further reading. As you so rightly pointed out, the media at large really does not know what to make of this ruling. From the stories the day before, it seemed the majority of papers expected a harsh sentence for Ms. England.

I hope that this surprise twist will lead to questioning on the part of the mainstream media. That someone can say, “Yes, I did it,” be pictured actually doing it and then have a judge say, “No, not really,” is astounding.

When I look at the reports of the soldiers involved and those dying, one thing strikes me consistently: their overwhelmingly

young ages. I am old enough to have clear memories of their entire lifetimes. During the past 21 years I have seen the rise of ever increasingly violent video games, ever increasingly violent treatment of arrestees at home and abroad, ever increasing disregard for those who are poor or foreign or both. I have also seen an increasing lack of outrage on the part of the media and the powers that be about these things.

An old song runs through my head a lot lately: Lords of the New Church’s “Open Your Eyes.” I only wish we would.

CMS

Portland, Oregon

6 May 2005

On “As recruitment falls, top military official warns of strains on US forces”

Signs of trouble among the rank and file! Why don’t they send those lazy, macho recruiters to fight this war? I’m sure they don’t want to go! As far as sending the mentally ill, criminals and the like, and giving them weapons, one can imagine the atrocities to come. This practice of deception by the military has been going on for a long time. And most of the horrible crimes that were committed in Abu Ghraib, Afghanistan and Iraq were done by those that were not competent to be in the military in the first place. They were either mentally unstable, criminals or abused during childhood. The evil, systematic, and torturous military training only solidified the fact that they don’t care anymore. This is the sad state that our military personnel are in now.

The real culprit is a sick system, a sick war and the depraved, gluttonous mentality that rules this nation. Don’t think the top brass are immune—they are just as sick by the same system, only they won’t tell because of their false sense of worth, pride, and because it hurts too bad!

MG

6 May 2005

On “Britain: Iraqi asylum seeker ends 46-day hunger strike”

If the home office thinks Iraq is safe and intends to deport the failed Iraqi asylum seekers, then why does it not tell the prime minister to bring the troops back? That is, if they do not have very important interest in Iraq, which obviously is the oil?! And if they think they need to stay because the situation is not settled yet and the country is not safe, how can they think about forcing asylum seekers back there?! It is a dilemma, isn’t it? Either let the Iraqis stay in Britain or leave their country alone. You can’t just throw them out of Britain and steal their fortune as well. I think Blair should get a grip and resign because of Iraq’s crisis.

A failed asylum seeker,

MH

United Kingdom

8 May 2005

On “San Francisco International Film Festival 2005—Part 1: What should be encouraged”

Excellent writing on the San Francisco International Film Festival. I want very badly to see *The Gravel Road* now. If I am not mistaken, the film marks the first time you have been inspired to use the word “loveliest” to describe a movie. Yet your straightforward and earnest prose remains, as always. Thank you for bringing to my attention these movies and the others you will write about in future articles on the festival.

AC

Jamestown, New York

10 May 2005

On “US: Kentucky Derby—‘high rollers’ and social misery”

I usually watch the Triple Crown, not because I am a better but because I like the horses. Thanks for your article which explained some things that puzzled me about this year’s Derby, including the perfunctory TV coverage. I was sorry to see that the classic clubhouse is now a monstrosity, while the media did not even bother to show us the last four horses on the way to the post. Too much time was spent in sentimental stories about one owner’s battle with colitis, and another’s poor little daughter, who was forced to peddle lemonade while dying of brain cancer. Apparently the moral was supposed to be how much holier they are than the rest of us. What a sad collection of mixed-up materialistic values. But not surprising in the town which gave us the earlier assembly of people of faith, on the theme, “It’s moral to hate.” What would Dick Francis say?

NR

9 May 2005

On “As Congress approves \$82 billion more: Wholesale corruption exposed in Iraqi contracts”

I have Reuters new on my home page and—as I do with many stories—sent their story about fraud in Iraq to a list of 20 of my friends. When I got to your site—as I do every day—you had the same story with 10 times as much detail. Of course I sent it to my list. I really appreciate the good reporting I find at your site and many of my friends have made the same remarks. Keep up the good work.

AH

Aurora, Illinois

5 May 2005

On “The Republican Party and the Christian right: sowing the seeds of an American fascist movement”

Fascism is a method of social operation and is defined in the 1973 edition of *The American Heritage Dictionary* as: “A philosophy or system of government that advocates or exercises a dictatorship of the extreme right, typically through the merging of state and business leadership, together with an ideology of belligerent nationalism.” This is a fairly accurate description of the current Bush administration.

Louisiana populist Huey Long commented: “If fascism came to America it would be on a program of Americanism.” Bush’s statement that “You are either with us or you are against us” and the many American flags being displayed by those who are with him are indications that the program of Americanism has been

instituted.

During WWII our government sent 14 million of us veterans to fight a war against aggressors, tyranny and bandit nations. Never once did our leaders proclaim that we were opposed to fascism either at home or abroad. A rather sad and sorry spectacle to have our nation engaged in a war fighting to defeat the armies of fascism but not fascism itself.

Nevertheless we veterans of WWII must remember that in 1945-46 at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials the allies tried major fascist war criminals before the International Military Tribunal, convicted and hanged them for the planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression, or a war in violation of international treaties.

There will be no allies to try the Bush administration for committing the same crimes.

At Cornell University, government professor Theodore Lowi now aptly describes the George W. Bush administration as “a toxic combination of God rhetoric, money, cronyism and severe moral hierarchy that poses a real threat of fascism for our nation.”

The assumption that it can’t happen here makes more likely the possibility that it will. The Bush administration is the most dangerous and criminal that has existed in my 81 years. It is our patriotic duty to tell our representatives in Congress to remove Bush and his criminal regime from office by impeachment for the good of our nation and the world.

RH

Yreka, California

5 May 2005

On “The death throws of a criminal regime: Downfall: Hitler and the End of the Third Reich”

I wanted to compliment your review, in particular for pointing out the villainy of Professor Schenk, and Hermann Fegelein. I’ve read a number of reviews of this film; this fact was never mentioned. It’s obvious that few film reviewers have any knowledge of this complex subject. My readings of the historical record concerning Hermann Fegelein is exactly like yours. This man was totally evil. For this film to depict him in a favorable light is, to say the least, very disappointing. Obviously, either the filmmakers didn’t know, or didn’t care, about the truth. This is sad, because this film has been praised for its historical accuracy.

BF

29 April 2005



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