

Letters from our readers

23 May 2005

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

On “Blair’s third-term agenda: privatization, attacks on civil liberties”

Well done, WSWs, for your continuous in-depth analysis of events as they affect the globe. In my own opinion, I believe Mr. Blair’s third term will only serve as a trigger for other world leaders, particularly African and South American heads of government, to perpetuate themselves in power. This is due to the fact that despite genuine calls by several civil societies for Mr. Blair to resign because of the shoddy nature of events surrounding the invasion of Iraq, he still secured a third-term mandate.

I believe if such leaders with unpopular policies and public acceptability are seen to be re-elected in liberal and democratic countries like the UK, then what do you expect in African countries?

ASD

Zaria, Nigeria

20 May 2005

On “US presses again on Chinese yuan and imports”

Your article excellently covers all of the relevant issues arising from this important contemporary topic. However, I just want to point out that GDP measures are now more commonly cited in terms of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP). The CIA World Factbook (<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>) estimates the 2004 GDP of China at \$7.262 trillion in terms of PPP and that of USA at \$11.75 trillion using the same measure. Thus, the Chinese economy is the second largest. It may also be of interest to note that Japanese economy is the third largest—just slightly greater than that of India.

PPP measures GDP far more accurately (as it takes the actual output into account) than the method that utilizes exchange rates. Thus, the statement in the article “China had accumulated \$659 billion of foreign currency reserves by the first quarter of this year—40 percent of GDP” requires modification.

Congratulations on your outstanding article.

MK

Atlanta, Georgia

19 May 2005

On “British MP Galloway blasts US Senate on Iraqi oil probe”

You end your article by stating, “Under US law, lying to Congress can result in a year in prison.” But you oughtn’t to leave it at that, since it is obviously true that George Bush & Co. have lied repeatedly to Congress with complete impunity. In the United States there are liars and there are liars. The first get punished, the second get praised. Who receives which treatment has to do with the brazenness of the lies and the prominence of the liar.

But there is another category, too: those who get punished for telling the truth. The most conspicuous current example of this sort of person is Mumia Abu-Jamal, who is whiling away his days on death row in

Pennsylvania. But he is not alone; he follows in a long line of punished truth-tellers, such as Dr. W.E.B. DuBois.

EG

Brooklyn, New York

19 May 2005

It’s about damn time that somebody of high credentials attacked this evil regime. If you or I did it, we would be called fanatics or terrorists and sent away. They made a serious error when they decided to go after Galloway. They were after him because of his outspoken attacks against the Blair administration with its chief goat Straw, as well as the Bush administration and its sick war. Galloway isn’t afraid of any of the threats this evil system can make, to say what he said, he knows the consequences and is prepared to accept them whatever they may be.

This I can only hope will wake the sleeping masses here in America to the evil that their country and resources are enslaved, and the evil that we are all guilty of. These evil atrocities, however, will not go without retribution and punishment. We neglected these atrocities for a long time hoping the situation would go away, but no, my friends, it seems we will only wake when we are on the brink of destruction, if we wake at all. For some it is already too late. Those who have sold their hearts on this evil atrocity, those that have no conscience and those that are uninterested, apathetic and indifferent.

Thank God there is someone who will fight, are the rest of us afraid of what may become of us if we resist? I’ll tell you this: Those that fight will at least have a clean conscience and if it means going to Abu Ghraib to suffer as our brothers have it will be worth it. Either way, your rights are being completely stripped, along with your wealth, comfort and security every day. So what will it take for you to act? Until they come and get you? Act now and tell all you know, keep telling until it is more than obvious to the average person, so that none can say they are ignorant of the situation.

Congratulations to the WSWs for making the Truth known without fear of loss of life or property. May God Bless you and may you always be with Him.

MG

19 May 2005

On “Further bullying of US media: White House demands Newsweek ‘repair the damage’”

I fully agree with your article. I have even observed that since George Bush has been in the White House, the media as a whole has been intimidated and altered. There is constant programming concerning blind, mindless patriotism, intense one-sided war coverage and war documentary footage and frequent programming interruptions by Bush, who with his very poor poker face and grins tells us the lies: that the war is for liberation of a people, even as he enslaves his own more and more. It is and was a war for dominance and oil.

MC

Alpharetta, Georgia

19 May 2005

On “Canada: On eve of non-confidence vote, Tory MP defects to Liberals”

Although I don't agree with everything said, I appreciate a well thought-out article at a time when the Canadian media are in hysterics.

Most interesting was your analysis at the end of the article. I think we're dealing with that classical rock-and-a-hard-place situation here. I think that Canadian politics tends to be more pragmatic and consensus-based than what goes on south of the border. This could be a good thing, but as you pointed out, such pragmatism constrains us (I'll go so far as to say divides us) with respect to issues that are of the most importance to workers.

Is it no wonder that provincial politics have become our main focus? Too bad.

RG

Hong Kong

19 May 2005

On “UN report finds: US war in Iraq yields a social ‘tragedy’”

Given all this, it's a minor miracle that there were no Iraqis flying planes into tall US buildings. It's also a testament to the character of the Iraqis—and, I think, the power of literacy. That a secularly educated country under so much duress did not resort to terrorist tactics says something. That the policies of our country were forcing Saddam into negotiations with more zealous entities—to the detriment of his own people—also says something. (Not that we seem to really care about keeping religion out of politics, ahem.)

Saddam was in many, many ways beyond horrible, but at least he tried to do things for the citizenry and succeeded in building a solid infrastructure. Bush is in many ways also horrible. What is he trying to do for the citizenry here? Why can't *we* have fully funded literacy programs to go along with the slaughter perpetrated by our armies?

I would like to see a report of this kind on the effects of our foreign policies on our domestic sphere. The monies and people we spend in wars are taken from programs which need funding in the states. Witness the high levels of lead in the drinking water of DC, the closures of libraries and schools, the erosion of the separation of church and state here. Also, we do not get accurate numbers of our un- and under-employed here, as once you fall off the rolls of the limited unemployment pay lists, you no longer are counted nor count.

Obviously, Iraq is much worse off than we, but if we are inflicting all this suffering for the “good of the US” shouldn't we be getting something out of it besides a fatter, richer top 1 percent? Shouldn't the Bush administration at least fund prescriptions for drugs which will quiet our collective conscience? Or are we already quiet enough?

CMS

Portland, Oregon

18 May 2005

On “Newsweek retracts Guantanamo abuse story”

If this is the kind of treatment which the US administration reserves for one of its own, one can only imagine the kind of reaction that real opposition will provoke.

EG

South Africa

17 May 2005

On “A comment on Brecht in Los Angeles”

Thanks for this very interesting and well-written essay on our production. Making good theatre under small nonprofit conditions can be a wearying challenge, and we are very encouraged by your appreciative remarks.

Best,

John Apicella

Antaeus Company

15 May 2005

On “Uzbekistan: US ‘war on terror’ yields a bloodbath”

The death of 500 people merits only a weak repudiation from the Bush administration because Uzbekistan is allowing us to have a base in their country in the war against terrorism. The leader used the ruse that the protestors were connected to Al Qaeda to justify murder because of their legitimate concerns over the dismal state of their existence under a corrupt regime. The Bush administration shouts to the highest mountain and imposes sanctions on China for the Tiananmen Square incident but endorses the brutal repression of justified and legitimate dissent from the people of Uzbekistan. History will judge them for this demonic hypocrisy and they will have to seek redemption from god.

JP

16 May 2005

On “Australian Aborigines become first target for ‘Welfare reform’”

I am an Indigenous female in Perth. I am disgusted with the welfare reform that the government is implementing and in particular those Indigenous people who feel that we need to be grateful for the assistance that the government gives us. The article you wrote on November 16, 2004 describes exactly the injustices that indigenous people will be experiencing, and I am saddened because we are not making a fuss over the changes. I believe that our basic human rights are being taken away from us. I feel very frustrated because everyone you talk to in the indigenous community says that they don't like these changes but nobody is prepared to stand up and fight.

SN

Cannington, Australia

15 May 2005



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