

Letters from our readers

20 August 2005

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

On "Why were the terrorists shielded? US military intelligence identified 9/11 hijackers in 2000"

To what extent were the US intelligence agencies involved in using Islamic fundamentalists in the former Soviet Islamic republics and Chechnya? I don't underestimate the possibility that certain aspects of the US ruling class would allow such an attack, but is it more plausible that a "double cross" took place with the terrorists being protected while being trained for operations overseas?

CO

Ferndale, Michigan

10 August 2005

It's about time that this information was made available to the people in the United States who do not get their information from the Internet and international news sources. The rest of us have known about the carefully observed escapades of Mr. Atta for some time. A known al Qaeda operative waltzes in and out of the country, even though he is on a watch list. Meanwhile, you and I and the rest of the traveling public are forced to stand in long lines, remove our shoes, belts or other articles of clothing, submit to embarrassing body searches and have our luggage rummaged through by airport employees who are known for stealing from passengers. Unless, of course, we are prevented from flying at all because for some reason our name, or one similar, appears on some "no-fly list," the source of which we are not permitted to know, any more than we are offered any recourse by having our name removed. Homeland Security? Don't make me laugh!

In the name of the "war on terror," ordinary Americans are subjected to insult and degradation by automatically being suspected of having criminal intent and are thereby conditioned to accept this sort of harassment as the norm without so much as a peep. In fact, any potential traveler with the temerity to question his or her treatment at the hands of these "guardians of security" promptly finds him or herself under interrogation or under arrest!

CZ

San Francisco, California

10 August 2005

On "Why is the media burying new revelations about 9/11?"

This story simply *must* get total worldwide coverage! It is the only way the debacle of 9/11 can ever be understood or explained, and dealt with. I actually read that the 9/11 Commission was well aware of this story and made the decision that its revelation would cause a complete breakdown of faith in the government and result in total anarchy...so it remained secret among the members of the Commission.

CS

11 August 2005

On "Caught in their own lies: 9/11 Commission admits excluding intelligence on lead hijacker, Atta"

The information you have presented in your article is dynamite. If the mainstream media would pick it up, the administration's agenda would surely unravel. You are doing an excellent job with your research and presentation of the facts. Keep it up, and soon enough the American

public will wake up.

BE

Becker, Minnesota

12 August 2005

I very much appreciate the direct manner in which facts of various issues are stated, and the sheer readability of the WSWS format. There is a clarity and purpose exhibited that announces the serious nature of each article, and highlights with directness of style the importance of each point made. I trust the WSWS reporters to give me the slant on stories that I appreciate and respect.

As to the 9/11 matter, I believe fully in the WSWS point of view that the event was at minimum allowed to happen by the Bush administration and its military and bureaucratic cohorts. There is no other explanation more obvious. Proof of this arises almost daily, as their lies unravel or are made to surface by leakers both within and outside their ranks. That revelation of some inside knowledge of the workings of the Bush administration might lead to a sea change within the US government is my desire, though not my expectation. Given the obvious downplaying of stories of immense importance to us all that is the function of the corporate-owned and -controlled mass media, I have little of Pollyanna left within me to nurture. It is my belief, though, that by living with eyes as little shielded as possible and telling our truth, that truth is made available to those others among us with eyes to see and ears to hear.

Thank you, WSWS writers and editorial board. Thank you for your time here today. Thank you for being a beacon of illumination in a sky kept dark by the corporate-owned, coercive, manipulated and manipulative media in all its forms. Thank you for continuing to tell the truth as we see it.

Sincerely,

PF

Chicago, Illinois

12 August 2005

On "Blair lays down framework for police state in Britain"

An incredible and depressing analysis. This completely corresponds with the police state fairly well in place now in the US, with the Patriot Act confirmed (thanks to support by members of the Democratic Party) and our attorney general who has made torture a legal option.

In both countries, the definition of who or what is a "terrorist" can change overnight. Anyone "anti-capitalist" or to the left of the Democratic Party, or anyone who buys the "wrong" books can become suspect. Even atheists may become suspect from this theocratic fascist state.

Now the AFL-CIO has split into two conservative union organizations as they seem to be fighting over dues! No grand vision to confront capitalism here despite all the attacks upon health care, social security, public education, etc.

My only thought on organizing here in US is that we must start at "square one" through a very basic educational informational attack focused on the most victimized segments of the working class. Forty-two million without health insurance! What are all these people thinking or doing when they become ill? Many are simply dying. Many are simply going into massive debt and then trying to declare bankruptcy (after liquidating everything). But I think the rage is starting to build as more

people come to realize how utterly corrupt this Bush gang is, looting the national treasury, social funds, etc.

JW

11 August 2005

I agree fully with your analysis of this tragedy. In the UK and around the world, we're moving ever closer to living in police states. The execution of de Menezes sets an extremely alarming precedent, given that the authorities have stated that more (potentially innocent) people may be summarily assassinated in public. We should all be appalled by this attitude and demand that all of those responsible from the top down be held to account and punished.

I feel that it's quite probable that some authority had given the go-ahead for a public assassination of a dark-skinned male as a litmus test for the readiness of the public to accept police-state measures. The media have shown their willingness to be accomplices of the state in that objective; however, the British public, I'm certain, will never accept it.

Consideration also needs to be given to the possibility that British authorities will utilize such death squads for the future assassination of those deemed to be nonviolent ideological threats to the state, under the guise of anti-terrorist operations.

RB

Toronto, Canada

27 July 2005

On "The death of Peter Jennings and the state of the American media"

Dear David Walsh,

Thank you for explaining so well the excessive public mourning for Peter Jennings. I thought to myself: He was handsome; I'm sorry he had to suffer a painful illness, but he was just as bland as any other TV anchor, and all he really did was read the news. Why are they making such a fuss? You answered my question. The media was indulging in self-obsession and self-celebration. This happens in other fields, and now it's not so mysterious.

I've only taken advantage of the more analytical and more accurate news reporting on the Internet for about two years. And what an education it is. I have a reverence for scholarship and digging for the truth. The kind of bland misinformation promulgated on commercial television is sacrilege to me. And it's very hard to accept the excuse that these stations are ruled by a corporate point of view. I keep trying to get them to be a bit more honest. For instance, I'm very concerned about Africa and was furious when I discovered the lies told by the media that disguised the role that the Bretton Woods institutions had on this continent. I don't understand how people can lie for a living. Don't they ever get tired of it? Or perhaps, they are misinformed.

In these dangerous, complicated times, it's essential that the public is educated about current events. But I think the mainstream media is even more soporific now than ever. It is so irresponsible to disguise the huge undemocratic flow of events behind the dumbed-down soap opera of the evening news.

YX

11 August 2005

Dear David,

Thank you for your analysis of the passing of ABC news anchor Peter Jennings and the excessive media attention this event garnered.

Perhaps you listened to right-wing Fox News commentator Bill O'Reilly's take on Jennings' life. O'Reilly took a skeptical tone, but he acknowledged that Jennings had encouraged and cleared the way for him in his early career at ABC. If true, this reveals a lack of moral courage on Jennings' part, but no matter. The important thing is that O'Reilly seemed to tread carefully in his evaluation, as if his handlers had warned him to "lay off Jennings." This calling-off-of-the-dogs is one of the rewards that people like Jennings receive for services properly rendered. As you described, Jennings was particularly precious to the corporate

media because "he knew something about the items he was reporting, and perhaps knew more than he was reporting" and that he possessed a "greater than average competence and interest in world events." It's a fact that he ignored the implications of his own background and intellect and practiced a seamless self-censorship that must have delighted TV executives. And these accolades at his passing are a media message to those who would follow in his timid footsteps.

Your description of the "painstaking process" by which the media delivers its message to the viewing audience was very informative, especially the role of "comic monologues on the late-night talk shows." When comedian Johnny Carson died, I wrote to *Counterpunch* in response to a glowing obituary on his career. The response from Alexander Cockburn was, "I liked the guy. Did you have a problem with him?" Well, yes, I did. I don't want my comedians (or my news "anchors") to serve to diffuse or short-circuit public outrage at the behavior of their government officials and the capitalists who put them in office. Nor does it do me any good when these mouthpieces are in good standing at the most prestigious of country clubs.

RR

17 August 2005

Extraordinary analysis of the ultimate "party liner" and "company man." Jennings' strengths were extant in the attempt to assure us that everything is all right. Clearly very little is "right" (save "wing") with our country or the world.

Though I watch very little network TV news, when I have, his demeanor seemed more important than any story he covered, thus negating the story itself. I will never forget him, stoic and unconvincing, in reading the Declaration of Independence at a concert appearance in Boston a few years ago on July 4th weekend. Seemed more like a father lulling his child to sleep with words of pabulum.

I will miss him as a champion of jazz. He was one of only a handful of prominent media members to outwardly show and express such genuine love and admiration for America's greatest artistic gift to the world. Most poke fun at it, or only emphasize the more pop culture aspects. It is a pity that the tradition and its extensions have to a large part fallen on deaf American ears. It is funny that a Canadian, and so many others around the world, gets what homelander refuse to, or can't appreciate. Now we have the copy-cat Sinatra singer (from Vancouver) Michael Buble, and the more substantive but poppish Diana Krall (Nanaimo) to "carry on." Yuch!

Continued kudos to all the WSWs writers. You are brilliant in thought, stance and delivery. Keep on.

MGN

Ann Arbor, Michigan

12 August 2005



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