

# Letters from our readers

2 November 2005

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

*On "Friedman on Iraq--the "thinking" behind the New York Times's debacle"*

As usual, the foul stench permeating the pages of the *New York Times* emanates chiefly from the pen of its celebrity columnist, Thomas Friedman. His attempts to continue justifying his support for imperialist aggression are becoming increasingly bizarre and contorted.

The problem with being a professional liar is that one tends to forget one's past lies, thereby becoming entangled in your own web of deceit. Such is the case with Mr. Friedman.

The fact that Thomas Friedman is under the impression that his readers will believe him, no matter how ludicrous his statements, is a manifestation of the contempt with which he regards the general public. Friedman's narcissism bespeaks a diseased psyche.

Regards

EG

South Africa

25 October 2005

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. And that is about the limit of my energy regarding the NYT. I don't consult it anymore. Years ago Friedman was on one of the Sunday morning TV news shows, and I always thought there was an air of contrivance about him, something unformed, immature. In recent glimpses I've had of him that has not changed. There are solid writers the *Times* could have in his place. What is his hold there, I wonder.

JG

Montana

24 October 2005

*On "Thomas Friedman and Iraq: A bad case of amnesia"*

Thank you for reminding us of the truth. I wish more writers would give the facts of history as you did in this fine article.

DM

Ellington, New York

27 October 2005

Good article on a sick man. My first question is how did or does such a twisted man full of anger and hatred get the position of one of the most influential positions in the USA?

Secondly, what is the source of this deep-seated hatred and racism towards Arabs and all other minorities, with the exception of allies or sellouts to the USA? This deep-seated

hatred and vengeful heart is fully expressed by the paranoid and phobic nature of his words.

Is New York society and American society so perverted that mad men are allowed to produce such filth and hatred without any punishment and restraint. That it is not only allowed, but lauded, makes me sick.

I have not read much of Friedman, but thanks to the WSWS for providing me the ability to see for myself the evil that is occurring on a daily basis that I would of otherwise have missed.

MG

27 October 2005

*On "Germany's grand coalition leaders suppress internal party discussion"*

Thanks for the two informative articles about the German elections. Pondering Schröder's cheap maneuvers in calling early elections and, worse, considering the appointment to the position of chancellor the candidate least favored by the electorate, one can't help remembering the atmosphere of the ill-fated Weimar Republic when Social Democrats, Catholics and others, consciously or unconsciously felt themselves closer to Hitler than to the proletarian left. This brought us Nazism and eventually WWII and its consequences: misery, mayhem, destruction and carnage.

Rereading recently Marx's *18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*, I was struck by many similarities between the happenings of the years following the French Revolution of 1848 and what is transpiring here under our very eyes. One is tempted to quote long passages but I'll be as succinct as possible.

"The period that we have before us [1848-1851]," says Marx in Chapter 3, "comprises the most motley mixture of crying contradictions.... Executive power that finds its strength in its very weakness and its respectability in the contempt that it calls forth.... Passions without truth, truth without passion; heroes without heroic deeds.... The official collective genius of France [substitute US] brought to naught by the artful stupidity of a single individual [i.e., Louis Bonaparte, a feckless adventurer and conman, nephew to the authentic Napoleon, but no more like his uncle than, as Hamlet says of his own uncle, "no more like my father than I to Hercules"]; or, to use Marx's own words in the same pamphlet, like farce to tragedy. No need to name our "single individual"!]; the collective will of the nation...seeking its appropriate expression...at length...finds it in the self-will of a filibuster. If any section of history has been

painted gray on gray, it is this. Men and events appear as reverse Schlemihls, as shadows that have lost their bodies.”

Needless to mention that both individuals suffer/ed from delusions of grandeur; both fancy/ied themselves great military leaders. And thus deluding themselves, both undertook reckless, lawless deadly ventures.

It is scary to think that in both Germany and the US seeds of fascism are/have been sown!

SR

27 October 2005

On “US colleges and universities increase tuition again”

College tuition may be increasing, and financing for Pell grants may be on the cutting block, but you can still earn plenty of tuition assistance by joining the military. What a convenient coincidence.

MZ

Maryland

27 October 2005

Yes, this is so deliberate and designed to slowly turn public universities into private institutions and return the USA to the pre-New Deal era of Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover. In the state of Illinois, funding for state universities has remained at the same level for the last three years thanks to a “Democratic” governor more interested in encouraging riverboat gambling (with its Mob associations and undermining of the economic status of local communities) and freezing state retirement pension funds. Similarly, higher administrators increase their six-figure salaries while civil service and faculty members cope with rising inflation.

Thanks to Blair, Britain abolished the grant system that was introduced in the postwar era to allow lower- class and middle-class students access to the ivory towers populated by the idle rich. He introduced fees, and now top-up fees, which will force students to deal with debt for most of their lifetime.

But is this not also a convenient way of preventing the type of student activism of the '60s and populating universities with the children of the rich who will not only maintain the status quo but continue to oppress the working class even further and prevent any “contamination” of higher education by those ungrateful masses who do not know their place in society? Yes, it is a worrying trend but one that involves deliberate design for obvious reasons.

TW

27 October 2005

As a college student, I can provide plenty of examples to support this. My roommate, soon after school started, began talking about looking for a loan. He actually hurriedly applied for one day before tuition was due, seemingly without much understanding of what it meant. Along with him, many, many other people I've talked to seem to be relying on loans, a lot of them from middle-income families too. My parents took one too, though I tried to convince them how silly it would be to put off paying now (which they could do) just to pay even more

later. Any further cut in spending for grants will surely prove devastating here.

JL

27 October 2005

On “US Senate resumes attack on antiwar MP George Galloway”

I applaud Mr. Galloway's statements in front of our Congress and am chagrined to my inner core that these truths have not altered the course of events in Iraq. The public is fed watered-down pabulum here in the states, and the independent media sources we have are not aired on cable TV. I viewed Mr. Galloway on an independent free speech channel that *many* Americans are unaware of. I am becoming more and more disheartened. Thank Mr. Galloway and thank you.

LA

Orlando, Florida

27 October 2005

On “Bush administration seeks legal sanction for torture”

George Bush and his administration have left little doubt as to their position by showing their disdain for the “quaint” concept of international law and by scuttling US recognition of the Geneva Convention. What they have been less open about is the deliberate conditioning and immersion of the American public as to the validity and expediency of torture.

One example: The on-going television series *24: Season 4*. (I bought the DVD and watched 3 out of 6 episodes). In one, the secretary of defense recommends the use of torture for his son who is guilty of dissent and possible concealment. In another, a young woman working for CTU, on the mere suspicion of her supervisor, is routinely abused with a stun gun. In both instances, the audience is witness to extremely graphic examples of nerve injections, bondage and total sensory bombardment. The message to the American public is loud and clear.

Can we now expect on Reality TV a Bush scenario of “Family Values” in which we are embedded with the 82nd Airborne and bear witness to the brutality of their frustration?

KL

Malden Bridge, New York

27 October 2005



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