

Letters on the Cheney shooting incident

18 February 2006

The following is a selection of letters sent to the World Socialist Web Site in response to articles written on the Cheney shooting incident.

On “Unresolved questions in the Cheney shooting incident”

Your “angry drunk” scenario may be a lot closer to the truth than Cheney’s version in his *Fox* interview. R.J. Eskow drew out the contradictions in Kathleen Armstrong’s position: “Then there was this Armstrong quote on MSNBC: ‘There may be a beer or two in there,’ (Armstrong) said, ‘but remember not everyone in the party was shooting.’”

“Interestingly, Armstrong’s playing with words here. She later said that she (Armstrong) hadn’t had anything to drink, so at least one of the other three must have been drinking—and the other three were shooting. So while her statement was literally correct (‘not everyone ... was shooting’), it gives the false impression that nobody drank and shot.”

And further: “Armstrong said she saw Cheney’s security detail running toward the scene. ‘The first thing that crossed my mind was he had a heart problem,’ she told the Associated Press. In other words, she didn’t see the accident. All of her statements, replete with colorful sidebars about getting ‘peppered pretty good,’ gave the false impression she was an eyewitness. She wasn’t.”

JS

16 February 2006

There have been studies recently on how raises in the terror alert level coincided with potentially embarrassing incidents or politically sensitive times for the White House (such as election time). They’ve been much quieter with the color changes since. I find it interesting that this shooting happened right when Scooter Libby revealed he got his outing-of-Plame orders from Cheney himself. Could this be their new means of attention deflection? Talk about “taking one for the team”!

CMS

Portland, Oregon

16 February 2006

In your article “Unresolved questions in the Cheney shooting incident,” you state the following: “Press accounts suggest that Whittington was hit by as many as 150 to 200

pellets, meaning that he received nearly the full charge of birdshot from a single blast. This fact and the nature of the wounds seem to confirm the reports that Whittington was standing about 30 yards from Cheney when the vice president opened fire: any closer, and the wounds would have been far more serious; much further away, and dispersion would have caused many of the shot pellets to miss.”

The media is missing the point on this—the official story is a lie. Cheney was hunting with a 28 gauge shotgun shooting #8 birdshot. That type of firearm is not powerful enough to penetrate through a hunting vest, clothing, skin, and muscle and become lodged in Whittington’s heart at 30 yards. The ballistics just don’t support it. I wrote a small post on this on my web site www.deprogrammed.us, which shows the ballistics test and proves that the official story is a lie. Also, at 30 yards the shotgun pellets would have expanded to 5 or 6 feet spread; there is no way Whittington could have “received nearly the full charge of birdshot.”

I do agree that they were stalling, probably to sober up from drinking and to get their stories straight. I love WSWs.com. I visit the site every day to read the latest headlines.

Thanks,

MP

16 February 2006

Contrary to the statement in your article, I think the facts do not support the claim that Whittington was shot at a distance of 30 yards. This morning, Alex Jones at infowars.com conducted a test using the type shotgun used by Cheney. Their tests showed that the shot pattern was 8 feet wide at 30 yards; and, furthermore, penetration tests showed that at 30 yards, the shot would not penetrate two shirt layers, and penetrated a watermelon only to a depth of 3 mm. According to their tests, Cheney would have had to be only 15-18 feet away when he shot Whittington, or about 5-6 yards.

If true, this part of Cheney’s account can be objectively refuted, so this aspect of the incident would seem to beg for further investigation.

JM

16 February 2006

On “Cheney’s hunting accident: a bizarre and sinister episode”

I’m an attorney in Corpus Christi, Texas. Kenedy County is a very sparsely populated area, with large ranches and little employment outside of oil and gas and ranching. It is still run under a “Patron” system, where the large ranch owners have total sway.

It is extremely unusual for anyone to receive a “warning” for a game violation. The ranches want strict law enforcement against hunting violations, poaching, over limits, etc. I have tried several cases for persons charged in that county. Dismissals and acquittals are rare.

LC

Corpus Christi, Texas

15 February 2006

Can a person be charged with an offense for a “hunting accident,” where a person is injured or killed? It would be interesting to see if this is the case, and if it is, then he should be treated just like any other American. He was careless and failed to follow basic safety rules. At the very least he should be banned from owning firearms.

GG

Mission, British Columbia

14 February 2006

Has anyone thought that after a good meal with lots of fine drink, etc., at sundown as was reported, the VP was not as alert as he should have been when hunting with others and that might have been the reason for delaying the report to officials? After 24 hours, no alcohol would have been detected in his blood.

YW

Woodville, Ontario

14 February 2006

It is surprising to note the similarity between Elmer Fudd and Vice President Dick Cheney who both blast first and look later. In the first case Bugs Bunny always gets away, but unfortunately for the people of Iraq and Harry Whittington, Cheney is much more hazardous. Dick never seemed to have mastered lesson one of all hunting courses, which teaches that one should never shoot a gun unless the target is clear. Or, does Dick really give a hoot about gun rules, or the cannon fodder he has sent to Iraq, or the working people of America?

CS

Taipei, Taiwan

14 February 2006

Your right—even when Bush falls off his sofa and chokes on a pretzel, the press are informed. But even more serious than contacting the media is the question: Were the police called? Somehow I doubt it, despite it being mandatory in any accident. Does Cheney think he is above that because of

his position, or was he drunk? The blatant arrogance of this man—and the entire Bush cabal—is beyond belief. It makes Nixon look like a paragon of virtue.

MB

Los Angeles, California

14 February 2006

This “accidental” shooting by a man who didn’t possess a Texas duck stamp is a crime. Buying a Texas duck stamp *after* hunting is not sportsmanlike. Since Mr. Cheney is a valued spokesperson and member of NRA, it reflects poorly upon the NRA, which claims to represent only law-abiding gun owners. To bring Mr. Cheney to account for this illegal act may not curb his reckless ‘public be damned’ conduct, but it is a start. It would be a way to prove that Mr. Cheney is unworthy of his office and induce him to resign, or be a start of the impeachment process to remove Mr. Cheney from the vice presidency of the USA. To expect NRA to castigate Mr. Cheney’s conduct, Texas to discipline him or for his resignation or impeachment is to expect a pig to sing and fly.

LL

Whitehall, Pennsylvania

14 February 2006

Good article. And isn’t it ironic that, the butcher that he is, he has now actually used his own hand? Of course he’s guilty of the slaughter in Iraq, Afghanistan and throughout his sad life. Everywhere he has gone he has left a trail of death and destruction. What hope is there for him, or Hitler for that matter? Good reporting. Tell the Truth always, it will defend you from evil!

MG

14 February 2006

The fact that they didn’t let the Texas authorities investigate this, and waited 24 hours before letting it get out, just proves that this administration thinks it is above the law and can do anything it pleases. Maybe if Cheney would have served his country during Vietnam, like all the poor people had to, he would have learned how to safely handle a firearm. Then again, maybe he was getting practice for a hunting trip with Scooter Libby.

KF

14 February 2006



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