

Letters from our readers

8 March 2006

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

On "Unions for flight attendants, pilots agree to huge concessions at Northwest Airlines"

Thank you, Jerry, for a fine report. I am a 17-year striking Northwest Airlines AMFA Technician. I am one of many who was laid off for 18 months just recently, then called back to work in January 2005, and then was out the door with the strike in August 2005. Many of us are unable to find work because we have been silently blackballed, and there are no unemployment benefits for most of us. I also have over 300 shares of NWA stock that was forced on me during the 1993 concession with the agreement that it would be paid in full after a 10-year maturation period at \$47 a share. Wrong! NWA is incorporated in Delaware, a state apparently very corporate-friendly with a judge that absolved NWA from honoring their commitment to repay that stock. I am fed up with corporate America and this administration in particular. The middle class in this country is disappearing *fast*. Good-paying jobs are a thing of the past, and the people in this country better wake up quick before it is too late! Thank you for your time.

JL

4 March 2006

I'm a former Northwest Airlines employee who lost his job after 25 years as a mechanic during the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association strike. Thank you for finally telling the story the way it really happened. We were forced to strike, and once out the door we were locked out and replaced. The company was in the process of outsourcing our jobs before we ever went on strike. Thanks also for telling how the other unions scabbed on us and sealed our fate. I've moved on to a new job, but I've lost a lot in the process. After 25 years, it's hard to believe a company could be so cold-hearted.

MK

4 March 2006

On "Northwest and Delta executives to make millions from bankruptcies"

I read your article regarding the "golden parachute" packages that the executives at Northwest Airlines and Delta Airlines have given themselves. I am a flight attendant with NWA for the past 33 years, and we are in the final stages of Judge Gropper making his final decision. The information that you have written about needs to be given out to the general public so they don't think that we airline employees are being unreasonable in our demands for a fair contract. I keep hearing, "If we hadn't asked for such outrageous contracts for years, the company would still be in good shape." Whereas, the real truth is that if the company had been managed correctly and with fairness, then we would have found a solution together to fix this problem. If the Top Brass had not taken enormous bonuses and stock options, and cashed them in, we would still be solvent, and we would also have been able to compete with anyone. I live in the Minneapolis-

St. Paul area, where the prospect of NWA ceasing operations is quite probable. If you could help get this information out to the general public, it would be appreciated. Thank you for anything you can do,

SK

Maple Plain, Minnesota

1 March 2006

On "Bush secures nuclear accord with India"

On March 2, George Bush gave a speech to a selected Indian audience in New Delhi. He gave a call to spread freedom and democracy to all countries whose people have a "hunger" for freedom. The call included support to reformers and dissidents of countries hostile to the US. Bush's call for Indians to support dissidents in countries like Iran, N. Korea, Cuba, etc., is a dangerous move for world peace and order. It goes against the basic principle in international relations—non-interference in each other's internal affairs. If spreading of democracy is their mission, why not start with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Pakistan? Iraqi people did not ask US or UK to "liberate" them through missiles and bombs and continued occupation. However, the same US had supported the dictatorial Saddam Hussein during the 1980s, especially in Iraq's war against Iran. And the same US had supported the Iranian dictator Reza Shah Pahlavi during the 1970s, who later was overthrown by a popular revolution. Even the concept of supporting the dissidents has been abandoned in Iraq with the dumping of Ahmed Chalabi when he was found to be no more useful to the US. No other country or region is asking US to "liberate" them through invasion and occupation. If it is tolerated, such a "crusade" for freedom and democracy can spread to other countries that may oppose US monopoly. That such a call has been made from the Indian soil is still more offensive. I hope the Indian government dissociates from such idea by giving an appropriate rejoinder.

JP

India

5 March 2006

On "Protests against Bush in India: For an international socialist strategy to fight imperialism"

As always, the article is spot-on and provides a brilliantly clear-cut review of the history and what needs to be done. According to my view, a minor shortcoming occurs in the following paragraph in the latter part of the article: "Workers in India must mobilize themselves as an independent political force and rally the toiling masses in support of an anti-capitalist program. Caste oppression, landlordism and other legacies of India's imperialist subjugation and belated capitalist development will only be liquidated as a by-product of the international socialist revolution." I think the term 'Communalism' must also be included in the line "Caste oppression, landlordism and other legacies of India's imperialist subjugation." This captures the whole scenario and makes the analysis total and all-inclusive.

PG

1 March 2006

On "Philippine president imposes state of emergency after alleged coup attempt"

The fact that Arroyo is arresting people for rebellion against Marcos in 1985 is telling. One might conclude that the man went into exile but the family still has a hand in the government. That goes to show the system never changed, even given the rebellion and step-down. Aside from that, the politics is appearing as a fashion show theatre of possible "candidates" with no relevant differences, except in how they will affect capital.

JB

27 February 2006

On "New York Times raises new charges against German intelligence"

Very interesting article. These revelations don't surprise me, as it seems many times the public face of a nation's policy doesn't match what is happening behind the scenes. People and nations are allowed public cover while pursuing other policies away from prying eyes. However, what I can't help wondering about is how the *New York Times* was able to get this particular "top secret" report and why the Bush administration hasn't seen fit to launch an investigation over this leaking of classified information.

MZ

Maryland

2 March 2006

On "Two dead, 100 injured in Los Angeles County jail riots"

What impact your article has. I am a fellow journalist who is teaching right now at Pasadena City College, near Los Angeles. I showed your article to one of my students, a Vietnamese ex-convict, and he said: "That's just like how it is." Keep on tracking this subject, Kevin.

MM

Los Angeles, California

2 March 2006

On "Capitulation to Zionist censors: Play on Rachel Corrie canceled by New York theater group"

Art inspired by Rachel Corrie has been censored many times. Google "The Skies are Weeping." Art which portrays Palestinians as a people with rational international standing is routinely marginalized at best. Sometimes, the best of it just disappears.

PM

Wasilla, Alaska

3 March 2006

On "Lawrence Summers resigns as Harvard president"

My political affiliation is not socialist, but in the six months, or thereabouts, in which I have been reading articles on your website I have been exceptionally impressed with the quality of the writing on a broad range of topics. David Walsh is particularly thoughtful and intelligent. I had not read Bill Van Auken before his current piece on Lawrence Summers. After reading it, I bookmarked the site to remind myself to come back more often. WSWs is a fine resource and a source of encouragement for those with similar, if not identical, political views.

JW 25 February 2006

On recent news stories

Dear WSWs,

I wanted to add a thought about the recent big stories in the news—no, not the millions suffering in the Third World or the looming civil war in Iraq, but the Dick Cheney hunting incident and the

proposed sale of seaport control to an Arab company. It really shows the true nature of the American news media, that these non-issues have become such widespread "news stories." They don't involve anything serious (you're right that the UAE shipping scandal is a xenophobic attack from the right in preparation for the 2006 congressional elections), but they do pander to basic knee-jerk reactions from the population. "Seaports controlled by Arabs? What's your reaction?" Remember, these so-called news services are corporations whose sole purpose is to make profits by selling advertising space. Telling the news is just their vehicle to do it. The pushing of this basic-instinct faux news is the consequence of our privatized, corporate media. Now let me go back to reading your article "Millions facing drought and famine throughout Africa." Thanks, guys.

PM

24 February 2006

On George W. Bush

Every critic of George Bush thinks the man is incompetent; but when the president's goals are considered, he's been successful. George W. Bush is the "archy" in oligarchy. His domestic agenda is to funnel the wealth of the 99 percent of our country into the bank accounts of the 1 percent. He's good at it! That's what he means by "reform." Perhaps every domestic program is being destroyed, but his cronies are doing "a heck of a job" getting rich on the lobbyist's and tax payer's money.

The president's foreign policy is to take over the wealth of the world by military force if at all possible. Where some see failure in dealing with our allies, I see American corporations crushing competitive enemies such as the European Union. Where some see failure in Iraq, I see American corporations that not only control but also own Iraq's oil. Where some see economic failure with huge deficits and massive spending on military hardware, I see big bucks for the war profiteers. Where some see failure to catch Osama bin Laden and his merry men, I see a masterful plan to keep our country in a state of constant war and constant fear so we'll keep voting for him against our own interests. Is Bush incompetent? It depends upon whether you are in the 1 percent or the 99 percent.

JB

Las Vegas, Nevada

28 February 2006



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