

Letters from our readers

8 May 2006

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

On “Lies surround first death of an Australian soldier in Iraq”

An excellent overview on this disturbing and yet predictable set of events surrounding the death of Australian Private Jacob Kovco. To add to this, the story behind the company that has the contract to transport Private Kovco’s body is a further indication of the lengths these corporate sponsors will go to profit from the spoils of this disgusting war.

It was revealed deep within the pages of the Saturday, April 29 edition of the *Sydney Morning Herald* by Mike Carlton that Kenyon’s parent company is Service Corporation International (SCI). This company is based in Houston, Texas, and it claims to be “the dominant leader in the North American death care industry.” SCI’s billionaire founder Robert Waltrip is an old friend of the Bush family and a big contributor of money to Bush and his father’s election campaigns. In 1999, George W. Bush was involved in a scandal known as “Funeralgate” where a whistleblower accused the company of “recycling” graves—old corpses had been removed and replaced by new ones. An example was given where in two Jewish cemeteries in Florida, bodies were exhumed and dumped in the woods. The scandal ran through the Texas courts, reaching all the way to then Governor Bush.

It appears that stories such as these are all too common and adequately describe the caliber of the criminal element involved in carrying out this war. The desire for massive profit by a few, both in and out of war, knows no bounds and is in profound conflict with the needs, and dignity, of the majority.

JB

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

29 April 2006

On “Bush administration demands UN action against Iran”

It is curious that Iran, a member of the IAEA, is being hounded for exercising its right to exploit atomic energy

for peaceful purposes, especially as it has signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (unlike other countries). In fact IAEA is promoting such peaceful use of atomic energy to its members, and it is the normal activity of IAEA to verify whether a country has embarked on enrichment to weapons-grade uranium. Iran has stated that it was willing to submit itself to IAEA inspection. The proper way to proceed in the case of Iran would be to ensure that Iran indeed allowed free and unannounced inspection. It is clear that the US has a particular interest in Iran, not unlike its interest in Iraq. Expecting the UN to punish a member country of the IAEA on the basis of a perceived and unsubstantiated intention (to produce atomic weapons) would be a curious, new legal approach.

LL

2 May 2006

On “US: Millions of immigrant workers join May 1st ‘boycott’”

Superb article. I am from the state of Maryland and my Senator, Barb Mikulski, despite the fact that she identifies herself with the “liberal” wing of the Democratic Party, has issued a statement on the immigration issue that is as distastefully reactionary, racist, and xenophobic as something you would expect old Bull Connor to have said. It is frustrating because after three emails to her on this issue I keep getting back auto-reply messages which thank me for my comments and assure me that like myself, Mikulski is concerned about the way the law is being broken by millions of immigrants. Like myself? What? Evidently messages to our senators aren’t even read. The democratic process has gone to hell. Those we elect to represent us don’t even care what we have to say. They vote as if their opinions are the only ones that matter, and their opinions are drastically reactionary when you get right down to it, despite all that fancy talk about women’s rights and “education reform.” I am convinced that most Democrats are just fancy puppets designed to pacify liberal sentiment against the capitalist system. I am not going to give up on bugging Mikulski’s office. But it is a damn shame that I must approach this duty with the

sad knowledge that it probably doesn't matter much anyway.

KS

Maryland, US

2 May 2006

On "Survivor of West Virginia mine disaster says respirators failed to work"

The United States, Mexico, and Australia have all, this year, experienced mining disasters. A more superstitious mind might think that the Earth was just trying to force us out. This mind, however, thinks it's time for the miners of the world to unite. A worldwide mining strike and workers' seizure of control of the mines is in order, to be accompanied by the forming of a workers' party which would ensure the safety and fiscal security of all workers.

CMS

Portland, Oregon, US

29 April 2006

Thanks for following up on this story. Our middle-class family, immigrants from England after WWII, lived in New Martinsville, West Virginia, where I went to high school in the 1950s. The most unforgettable lesson I learned in West Virginia was that extreme poverty existed among large numbers of people in the "richest nation" on earth.

I have since learned that corporate capitalism can never allow that its employees are human beings. The paycheck comes from the "Human Resources Department." Humans are equated with any other resource (land, machinery, etc.) needed to generate profit. The object is always to minimize the cost of those resources. Capitalism, forever driven to maximize profit for the few, can never meet the needs of human society.

JW

30 April 2006

On "As Big Oil posts record profits: Washington warns no relief from soaring gas prices"

Gas prices in the UK are twice those in the US. Always have been. Most of it is tax with only a small portion going to the retailer who relies on selling convenience foods, newspapers, etc., to make the business pay. In the long run the American public are going to have to make do with less, have smaller cars or use public transport, walk or cycle to work. It won't kill them!

PA

1 May 2006

On "Hillary Clinton, the Democrats and the Iraq war: A socialist alternative"

I've tried getting this message into print, but was not

successful in our area. Someone should tell Hillary that she was already co-president for eight years. What person in their right mind would want to journey back to the Clinton years? There was Waco, Randy Weaver shootings, Rose Law Firm, health programs, Monica Lewinsky, Vincent Foster, Kosovo, continual daily indiscretions of White House occupation. NAFTA, which Bill Clinton stated he would veto if elected, and instead got passed right away. To me, Clinton carried out Bush's programs, and Hillary if ever elected will continue to push Bush's agenda. They're all part of the same group, and people in this country deserve more.

PO

West Troy, Wisconsin, US

29 April 2006

On "Britain: Blair denounces liberal critics for opposing attacks on democratic rights"

Yes, very good point at the end of your piece, i.e., the gulf between the *Observer* and its readership. Recently the online *Guardian* has offered its readers a forum for instant blog-type comments to follow its articles by its regular columnists. These comments have been generally more left-wing, perceptive and a better read than the columnists themselves. Unsurprisingly, the *Guardian* is already cutting back on this service and will probably end it altogether before long, but it certainly validates your point.

The *Guardian* and *Observer* are as much pro-establishment newspapers as it is possible to get. Blair and Clarke's outraged paranoia about a few articles in such newspapers is very scary. Nascent Nazis both. No doubt about it. Not in my mind anyway.

JE

30 April 2006



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