

Letters from our readers

29 July 2006

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

On "Polls indicate growing dissatisfaction with two parties in US"

Congratulations on another wonderful article! I've recently had the honor (note sarcasm) of seeing the Democratic candidate for Pennsylvania Senate Bob Casey's "New Direction" tour at the Mercer County Court House. It's disgusting how similar the Democrats' and Republicans' political agendas are. Casey is so full of vague hollow rhetoric, and if he's voted into office it wouldn't be surprising at all when there aren't any visible progressive changes taking place. His views on "homeland security" are tantamount to the Republicans. His views are largely pro-war and pro-American hegemony in the Middle East. He also supports Israel's imperialist aggression against Lebanon. I simply find it rather ironic to hear a big-business-backed Democrat like Casey talk of "protecting the little people." I don't believe Casey has mentioned much on social issues either.

Bob Casey certainly doesn't have a problem with dismantling democratic rights and freedoms, which is the logical conclusion to be drawn from his campaign plank about "national security." This was clearly demonstrated to me when the part and parcel of the Democratic Party machine attempted to stifle a protesting Republican dressed as a duck who was holding up a sign that said, "Bob Casey is ducking the issues." Paid Democratic Party members tried to block the protester's sign. I made a sarcastic comment and gained the stares of party pundits standing nearby: "Look over there, the Dems are trying to create a democratic environment where free speech prevails." The protester could just as well have been a member of a third party. The Democrats certainly have the shock troops and resources to keep third parties from jeopardizing their hegemony over the working class. However, I'm sure this obstacle will be overcome by stalwart socialists in time.

After the event ended, I was asked to be interviewed by a journalist working for Capital wire, a web site. I happily agreed. The reporter asked what I thought of the speech. I told him that I thought the speech was hollow propaganda to win votes. That Casey was a member of the two major

corporate-backed political parties, and he had the same pro-war views as the Republicans. The two major parties have ceased to be different, but rather they operate for the small group of plutocrats who run the country. The reporter asked me what party I would identify with then. I told him of the SEP, and gave him the address of the web site.

I found this particular statement excellent, it sums up the political atmosphere created (an impasse) by the two major parties in America: "The existing political institutions do not provide any means for the articulation of popular opposition to the war, let alone a real possibility of changing policy." I could not agree more! Thanks again for what you're doing!

PG

Mercer, Pennsylvania, US

28 July 2006

On "Hillary Clinton and New York's gay marriage ruling: a calculated bow to the right"

The Clintons have both consistently been conservative. Consider their push for advocacy of current welfare policies, which have so powerfully created a massive, super-low-wage workforce that has been so wildly profitable for US corporations. Hillary Clinton was more zealous about imposing these exploitive policies than her husband. Why does it surprise anyone when she proves to be just as staunchly conservative in other matters? This *is* what the "new Democratic Party" is about.

DF

Wisconsin, US

15 July 2006

On "Five more US soldiers charged in rape-murder atrocity in Iraq"

Dear WSWS,

I am writing to commend Ms. Kate Randall for her articles on the atrocious gang rape and murder of Iraqi girl Abeer Qassim Hazam, the brutal slaying of her family, and the burning of their bodies at the hands of five United States imperialist colonialist soldiers.

Abeer's age has been placed at 15 to 25 years old. Associated Press reports from about July 9, however, cite a doctor at Mahmoudiya hospital in Iraq, saying that she was 14 years old. This is monstrous and reflects a general pattern of sexual war crimes in Iraq. Available sources confirm this

reality, for example, “Sexualized Violence Against Iraqi Women by US Occupying Forces” presented to the UN Commission on Human Rights in 2005.

Sexual war crime is a component part of US militarist adventurism. During the Korean War, raping of North and South Korean women and girls was so indiscriminate that South Korean officials, in at least one known case, had to complain about these excesses. *The Origins of the Korean War* by Bruce Cumings and *The Bridge at No Gun Ri* by Charles J. Hanley et al. briefly refer to rapes in Korea. US state repositories such as the National Archives also hold North Korean sources that document these sexual crimes.

As is more commonly known, US soldiers in the Vietnam War were encouraged to rape women and children in an effort to break the will of the Vietnamese people. The latter emerged victorious in their relentless anti-colonial, anti-imperialist liberation struggle.

Highlighting US sexual war crimes in Korea and Vietnam is not to support the Stalinist regimes in Pyongyang and Hanoi. Rather, it observes that rape and rape-murders are, officially or unofficially, standard operating procedure in US colonial military culture. Rape is prohibited as a war crime under Article 27 of Geneva Convention IV (GCIV), Articles 75 and 76 of Additional Protocol I, and Article 120 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). But these atrocities will continue unless US forces are withdrawn from Iraq.

Sincerely yours,

ADW

19 July 2006

On “Bush’s veto: Stem cell research and the rise of American theocracy”

If Bush believes so strongly that each of these embryos represents a “unique human life” then I think the would-be parents who underwent the procedure to create these ‘beings’ should be legally required to maintain those cells in perpetuity. Failure to do so should result in murder charges against the unfit parents-to-be. Let’s be consistent here.

SE

San Jose, California, USA

20 July 2006

On “An attack on democratic rights: New Zealand man jailed for sedition”

I used to think that countries like New Zealand would be the last bastion of liberty and responsive government. I guess, like so many sane, progressive ideas, that one too can go swirling down the toilet.

BS

Springfield, Oregon, USA

25 July 2006

On “Ten Canoes: a dramatic exploration of ancient Aboriginal culture”

I was lucky enough to have the privilege of viewing a short film *Storytime* by Jub Clarke, a mystery thriller shot in Broome Western Australia 2005 (June). I was saddened by the fact it was not submitted by the producer. The reason why I wanted express my concern is simply because I feel that the rest of the world needs to see more indigenous films from *aboriginal* Australia—not only concerning the sadness we have endured but also the fact that our up-and-coming filmmakers are well and truly alive and doing other films besides the norm.

SC

South Headland, Australia

24 July 2006

On “Britain: culture secretary embroiled in Berlusconi bribery scandal”

Cracking good reporting! Needless to say, I have not seen, read or heard of any of this reported on by any American media, hence, the months delay on congratulating you on your exemplary work.

RM

Stone Mountain, Georgia, US

20 July 2006

On “Al Gore’s An Inconvenient Truth: political posturing and the Democratic Party”

An excellent piece of deconstructing a bogus solution to the problem of global warming, and you are absolutely right about Gore’s pusillanimous behavior during the skullduggery by the Republicans during the 2000 presidential election. The Democrats just do not know how to address instances of evil. And, they needed a virtuous but kick-ass Jim Baker in their camp.

RLB

Bradenton, Florida, US

15 July 2006



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