

Letters from our readers

18 September 2006

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

On “Bush admits secret prisons, demands Congress sanction drumhead tribunals”

You write, “There are some indications that the military commissions could be used against US citizens as well as non-citizens. The White House has stated this is not the case.”

I would refer you back to the original campaign for enemy combatants, etc., led by then Assistant Attorney General Michael Chertoff. Then, too, the administration asserted that they would not use these provisions against US citizens. However, Chertoff at all times openly asserted that they reserved the right to do so, even going so far as to assert this before the American Bar Association. And when it was necessary to do so, they did in the case of Padilla.

There were proposed amendments to the Patriot Act that would allow the government to revoke citizenship to both naturalized and native-born citizens. Recently, the US has refused to allow two US citizens—one naturalized and one native born—to return from Pakistan, effectively revoking their citizenship.

People have to recognize that all of the demands of this administration are to give them the tools for a dictatorship. Time after time when defeated in the courts they have gone back and made the same arguments. They do not back down. No assurances from the White House can be believed. If there were only 100 secret prisoners and 14 sent to Guantánamo, what happened to the other 86? And why were there hundreds of clandestine flights reported to handle 100 prisoners? We have only Bush’s word for it and he is a well-documented liar.

BR

Orange Park, Florida, US

8 September 2006

On “‘Green’ politics and imperialism: The case of Joschka Fischer”

As a member of the Greens of Ohio, I think your article is very stimulating. It is why I am more Socialist Equality Party than ever before. Thanks again for the sobering reality.

JK

Ohio, US

5 September 2006

On “Sri Lanka: Journalist’s abduction highlights intimidation of media”

Daily we are watching on the TV and news the horrors and the untold hardship faced by the legitimate Tamil citizens of Sri Lanka. The whole world knows why the Tamils fled their Motherland and sought refuge in the western countries, and how the armed struggle originated. The tears we are shedding from here for our kith and kin there in our Motherland are not just tears, but blood. It is flowing from our hearts. Can anyone see justice to this?

SR

5 September 2006

On “Spain: A decade of economic boom and stagnant wages”

I am a Spanish citizen in Catalonia, descendent of Swiss and Spanish parents. Basically, Spain is lovely from the outside, and nothing but the opposite to live and work in, and try to sustain an income sufficient to pay mortgages. Personally, I find Spain a country of poorly paid, unskilled workers with an average to low salary—an economy based on unworthy jobs. The common graduate will struggle more to find a job than a highly skilled technician or unskilled worker, but will earn the same wages really. So in a scenario of banks, properties and telecommunications “booming,” the reality is it is worse than ever to live here.

DF

Catalonia, Spain

5 September 2005

On “One year since Hurricane Katrina: the rebuilding of Mississippi’s Gulf Coast”

Finally someone has written a truthful article about the coast. Mississippi has been forgotten in this whole disaster. I’m so happy to read something that tells the whole story of what the coast has endured. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

SM

9 September 2006

On Africa

Greetings and congratulations for your articles in the WSWs exposing the worsening situation of poverty in Africa. The bourgeois media, most of the time, just repeats

Blair's false statements or the misleading reports from the World Bank/African Development Bank. I worked as a country economist for 17 years for the African Development Bank. I think that the results of the international organizations' intervention in Africa is poor. It needs to be exposed as an imperial tool of capital.

NO

6 September 2006

On "Letter from wife of Liberty City, Miami 'terror' suspect"

It is a wonder to me how people can say we are not living in a proto-fascist state these days. People being swept up on trumped-up charges to be held indefinitely has become the order of the day. This is not how it starts; this is how it progresses. Paid informants infiltrate groups, do not find what they "need" to find, and yet arrests are made anyway. Lives are ruined, and the informant is paid handsomely. And I am told that capitalism works.

CMS

Portland, Oregon, US

7 September 2006

On "A closer look at Kierkegaard"

You place Kierkegaard within the tradition that followed the spiritual side of Hegel, whereas Marxists developed the side that studied the scientific laws of the development of society, which is essentially true. However, because many vulgar Marxists tend to regard those laws in a deterministic fashion, I would point out that Marx actually resolved the two sides of Hegel's dialectic. Acting on Feuerbach's insights, Marx developed his dialectic materialism based on Hegel's science of logic as applied to the French materialists. He concluded that the active spirit of this historic era is not deity, as in Hegel's system, but the class-consciousness of the proletariat—a consciousness which is determined by complex material forces.

I would refer readers to David North's reply to Eric Hobsbawm, "Leon Trotsky and the Fate of Socialism in the 20th Century," specifically the section on "The Role of Consciousness in the Making of History."

JC

Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

8 September 2006

On "Capture of Sampur sets stage for intensification of civil war in Sri Lanka"

A sound and realistic presentation and analysis of the situation in and around Sampur, which makes me wonder always why most other journalists and reporters of the Sri Lankan press don't see events in a similar light. Are they mostly so hamstrung and mentally warped by the "Mahavamsa racist and religious cult"? Most of them seem to be wearing blinds so that they completely lose track of

also seeing the other side.

There is one aspect missing from your report, however. This pertains to the origin of the Mavil Aru initial closure of the water channel by the Tigers. According to this source, the Sri Lankan government had blocked an already approved Asian Development Bank project, which would also have benefited the Mavil Aru irrigation system and therefore the people living in LTTE areas—whereupon the closure was carried out by way of retaliation on the part of the Tigers. This discriminatory aspect of the ADB project had been kept under wraps by the press and government in order to blow it out of all proportions into a state of warring by the government and the military. It has to be also kept in mind that the assassination attempt on the Army Commander will be a constant source of irritation in the face of an already soured peace process after President Rajapakse came into power last November.

The president is presenting a Jekyll and Hyde posture, talking of peace and goodness sublime but in practice seemingly permitting both the peace process and the CFA to be destroyed through inaction and counterproductive measures affecting the Tamil population in the Northeast. Human rights violations and gross crimes against civilians keep soaring all the time since last November. Only a full-fledged UN-backed independent Special War Crimes Tribunal, like in the Rwandan ethnic conflict, can bring perpetrators of crimes to book and possibly halt the vicious cycle of violence and bloodletting.

As pointed out in your report, the possibility of an open war breaking out over Sampur is a very real one given the posturing by both sides.

SM

8 September 2006



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