

# Letters from our readers

25 September 2006

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

*On “The Bush administration and the CIA prisons: a new campaign of lies”*

It is entirely possible that George Bush does, indeed, find this to be “too vague” for him to understand. What concerns me even more is that our legislators appear to be doing nothing to stop Bush from pursuing his agenda. For years, we had to listen to outrage about the Clinton/Lewinsky “fling,” and millions of taxpayer dollars were wasted on digging up the most minute (and salacious) details of this strictly personal situation. The fact that Clinton didn’t eagerly “confess his sins in the public square” was then used as an excuse to push forward with an impeachment. Yet the long list of crimes—topped by that which will surely be viewed (if only in retrospect) as genocide of the Iraqi people—remains effectively unopposed by our legislators.

DF

Wisconsin, US

18 September 2006

*On “Bush demands US Congress pass bill sanctioning torture”*

I always get a sense of *deja vu* when you guys report on Bush’s pursuit of the right to torture captives. I think, “Haven’t I read this before? Didn’t we go through this debate a couple of months ago? And why is all of this necessary when torture was explicitly banned decades ago?” Of all the things for which a president can be persistent and dedicated, Bush chooses the double-whammy of torture and domestic spying. He’s doing impromptu press conferences, he’s issuing ultimatums, and his White House is gearing up for a big congressional fight—what priorities!

Anyway, I wanted to note the big support he’s receiving from the “family values” groups out there, who are supporting torture all the way and attacking McCain. To quote from a recent news article about the groups’ attacks on McCain: “‘Maverick status is looked upon as a strength in Congress, but a maverick in the White House is not looked upon with great admiration from our folks,’ Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, said Monday. ‘Politically, this isn’t wise,’ added the Rev. Louis Sheldon, chairman of the Traditional Values Coalition, which supports the president’s call for Congress to approve tough interrogation techniques for terrorism suspects.”

It begs the question: if humanity doesn’t count as a

“traditional value” for a Republican, what does?

PM

Washington, US

19 September 2006

*On “IAEA exposes US Committee’s lies on Iran’s nuclear programs”*

It seems the little boy who cried wolf has come to the end of his rope where credibility is concerned. What is he thinking? His tactics are not only transparent, but old. As they say, “Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me.” Of course, Bush himself flubbed this quote, which perhaps explains why he can’t see the problem with using the same lie twice. I mean, the American public is gullible, but wait a little longer before you use the exact same ruse! The world turned against him right away. His own people turned against him years ago, and now many of his own party find they must turn against him to stay in office.

I’m also wondering where exactly we’re to find the troops and resources to run a war on a second front. Certainly, the chicken hawks know the only thing preventing a wholesale popular rebellion is the lack of a full-fledged draft! But without one, how could the US regime possibly make a serious attempt at warring with Iran?

I can’t see how Bush brings himself to face the UN without collapsing in shame. Certainly, he must feel the loathing of the world. Then again, he is incredibly stupid.

BB

Oklahoma, US

19 September 2006

*On “A belligerent Bush addresses the UN: Washington threatens wider Middle East war”*

Excellent analysis. I would ask: Would a war on Iran require the use of nuclear weapons, in fact preclude the use of conventional weapons?

In the *One Percent Solution* by Ron Suskind, it is noted that the Iraq war was to serve as an example to the world of the risk of defying America. That is consistent with the objectives of the Project for a New American Century. That stated goal is to lop off any heads that rise up to compete with us and to thus cow the world into submission to our drive for world domination.

But it hasn’t turned out that way. In fact, it has made us seem unable to enforce world hegemony through conventional means and thus has the potential to embolden perceived enemies. Our

ally Israel faces the same problem as result of its invasion of Lebanon.

Both now have credibility and vulnerability problems. Iran now becomes a test of that credibility. Neither country can face another defeat. They either have to go all out to win or abandon their aggressive plans. In the case of the US, it would mean abandoning the

PNAC world domination concept. A conventional attack on Iran would seem doomed to ultimate failure. Charles Krauthammer recently outlined the cost: Retaliatory strikes against Israel and the US in Iraq, blockage of the Straits, soaring oil prices and severe economic impacts in Europe and the entire world.

Only an attack with nuclear weapons would provide at least a theoretical victory and one in which Iran would be so paralyzed that it could not retaliate, lacking both the ability and the will to do so. It would restore (in the minds of the real evil doers) our credibility and our willingness to do whatever it takes to assert our power. Something they have to do or give up their dreams of world domination.

Many in the Bush administration served in the Bush 1 administration. They were believers in a preemptive war with Russia and in the survivability of a nuclear war. Yes, they are crazy. In Bush 1, they were referred to by Powell and others as “the crazies.” The problem is they now are in a position to carry out their insane plans.

BR

Orange Park, Florida, US

*On* “European powers refuse to send more troops to Afghanistan”

America’s failure to secure any of its objectives since launching its preemptive criminal wars has resulted in the exacerbation of its economic impasse. The more violently it writhes to free itself, the more entangled it becomes—“The death agony of capitalism.”

The United States then has the unmitigated hubris to demand assistance from those countries that it initially sought to undermine by its unilateral action, to clean up the mess that it leaves behind, so it can free up its overcommitted forces and embark on further unilateral military adventurism. With the ferocity of the fighting in southern Afghanistan, the EU nations do not want to be embroiled in another Iraq, committing political suicide at home, by risking unnecessary casualties of their own citizens, who rightly despise the Bush administration.

In the wake of the disastrous aftermath in southern Lebanon, where the EU is ostensibly the occupying force, the vultures are circling.

DD

Melbourne, Australia

16 September 2006

*On* “No nonsense about Dada”

But Dada is organized nonsense. The movement began with Poe, spreading to French Symbolist poets such as Baudelaire. It

is characterized by the absence of any control exerted by reason. I saw the MoMA Exhibition and enjoyed it.

DS

18 September 2006

I enjoyed your article on the Dada movement and the recent MoMA exhibition. The question of motivation for the movement has been a crucial one for me, as it seems to be for you. One of the answers to this complex question is not frequently examined, and that is the issue of self and society, which converge at Ascona, Switzerland, in the early 20th century and the counter-Freudian movement in the early history of psychology spearheaded by Otto Gross. Gross was strongly influenced by Friedrich Nietzsche and developed a theory of the “revolutionary unconscious,” which attempted to counter Freud’s efforts at making the therapy serve the needs of the repressive society the unconscious finds itself at odds with. Huelsenbeck, Arp, and his wife Sophie Tauber, and many others in Dada and on its periphery stayed at Ascona at length to absorb the new vibrations that Gross set loose.

But here lies a knotty problem that to this day divides the politically committed socialist from the more individualistically inclined existentialists. It’s well known that the toggle in emphasis between the needs of the social organism as a whole and those of the individual determine how one orients oneself in the struggle between plumb-line anarchism and socialism, and Dada embodied this contradiction perhaps more fully than any other social formation. One of the most controversial figures in this epochal battle, which of course has not yet been resolved, was the philosopher Max Stirner, who perturbed a young Karl Marx enough for him to write a 300-page rebuttal of Stirner’s only significant work, *The Ego and Its Own* (1844). Perhaps even more than Nietzsche, the example of Stirner hovers over and permeates the Ascona experiment, and directly influenced some of the most important of the early modernists, Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia in particular. So the spirit of anarchism is, after all, a part of New York Dada as well, and provides an opening onto the subsequent efforts of surrealism to provide a positive dimension to the negation that was Dada.

DW

Chicago, Illinois

18 September 2006



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