

Letters from our readers

8 November 2006

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

On “SEP candidate for US Senate from New York interviewed on ABC TV in Rochester”

I’m sure our corporate leaders and their political lapdogs could not have been pleased to see ABC air Mr. Van Auken’s intelligent and eloquent indictment of the whole system of lies upon which the two party system is based. I’m glad to see New Yorkers have a chance to vote for Mr. Van Auken. Sadly in the American South, there is no such opportunity as yet. Continue to go forward—working Americans know the game is rigged and are looking for real leadership that addresses their vital concerns.

RM

Mobile, Alabama, US

27 October 2006

On “Michigan SEP candidate addresses high school, college students”

This is great! It fuels me to read this! Recently a comrade mentioned his opinion to me that election campaigns are an ineffectual way to dwindle money. He proposed instead that socialists “hand out newspapers and hold meetings instead.”

I had to feverishly disagree with his conclusions. Why? Because of the effects of the SEP’s campaigns! One would be hard-pressed to find another socialist organization that has been able to disseminate information so widely among the working class. The campaigns have utilized many different tactics—from one-on-one engagements on the streets, public meetings, to handing out flyers at protests. What other socialist organization has gone into high schools to speak with the students? It’s not just rhetoric. Your organization truly does reach out to the youth. Not to mention the fact that because of the campaigns the SEP has been afforded important mediums such as newspaper spots, as well as free radio and television airtime. The running of socialist candidates in the elections really does encompass all aspects of political agitation, and its fruits are visible in the fact that

thousands of people have been supportive and turned onto progressive ideas. So, kudos for the good work! All the best to you.

PG

30 October 2006

On “Election campaign reveals Democrats’ lurch to the right”

Good article. I’d sum it up as: “Ruling class reaches for Plan B, the Democrats.”

RVW

2 November 2006

On “Australia’s new sedition laws and the case of Brian Cooper”

Well done on covering this important story. Please keep in mind to report on the hearing of the Federal Court challenge to the ban which will be heard in Court on 28 November. Interestingly, news.com’s last report on the case was headed “Thought Police seize control” (<http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,20607904-5007146,00.html>). Perhaps the mainstream media are prepared to rethink their position on censorship.

Keep up the good work.

Stephen Blanks

Secretary, NSW Council for Civil Liberties

27 October 2006

On “Grisly photos expose real nature of Germany’s ‘peace mission’ in Afghanistan”

I read with interest your article on the grisly photos incident, involving German soldiers in Afghanistan. Some points occurred to me on reading your article, which I would like to share with you.

First, the Bundeswehr is after all the successor of the Nazi military machine. The WWSW carried an article some time back on CIA collaboration with ex-Nazis in the postwar period. Many of those individuals apparently continued in the postwar German political and military edifice. Therefore, I don’t know if the German political system was anything but reactionary all along. I say this because you have attributed the changed mindset to the SPD/Green party coalition of the 1990s. A leopard cannot

after all change its spots.

Second, to my mind the real difference in the postwar period was the division of Germany into two halves and the stationing of foreign forces in the country. This ensured Germany and the Germans would behave. That was the situation when I was resident in Bonn between 1985 and 1987, as the son of an Indian diplomat posted there.

Third, it is true Germany aspires for a larger role overseas. Germany has a military pact with my country, India. But Germany's continuing appetite for military pacts and balance of power *realpolitik* shows it has not really learned from its past, whether it be the Thirty Years War or the two world wars Germany initiated in the twentieth century. It would be instructive for Germany to draw lessons from the imperialist aggrandizements of the United States, before venturing once again on the same journey. After all, what is the fun in venturing forth on the same journey more than once?

SB

India

27 October 2006

On "Hungary: The controversy over the heritage of the 1956 Revolution"

Besides all these facts presented thoughtfully in this article, there is this question: Why is so much attention being given now to this revolution by the international media, governments, and even a local newspaper in Vancouver (*The Vancouver Sun*)? Will they do the same on the 90th anniversary of the October Revolution in Russia 1917 next year? Or will they repeat it with the 135th anniversary of the Paris Commune? I doubt it. But raising this question is important. The current Hungarian government is in big crisis, and it needs some "lift" or "help" from the public anger. European leaders came to the anniversary to help in this lift rather than just participate in the ceremony.

YK

Vancouver, Canada

31 October 2006

On "Missile strike on Pakistani Islamic school slaughters 80"

The attitude of the journalists and the publishers towards the atrocity that has been committed in Pakistan is eye-awakening, albeit the massacre of human being is routine. I have neither read any report in Pakistan nor any article that had been published from any part of the world, which has written so clearly and so bravely as has been written in this article. I have, therefore, selected this

article to be prominently hyper-linked on my web site.

For the sake of argument, if the "intelligence reports" have suggested surveillance of the madrassa and its student's activities, there may have been many reasons for Pakistan Authorities to raid. However, it is not clear why Gen. Musharraf's government has decided to select an option of air strike instead of normal course of arresting and prosecuting madrassa students. Pakistan has well-numbered and high-tech army, a brave police and a strong Frontier Constabulary (FC), and Bajaur is not too remote that it cannot be easily accessed.

The air strikes on its own soil provide enough encouragements and justifications to other countries, especially US and its NATO ally deployed in the neighboring country, to invade Pakistan as and when its "intelligence report" suggests.

Maulana Fazalar-ur-Rahman, an opposition leader of Pakistan, in a televised interview (AAJ television) has seriously criticized Gen. Musharraf's government and said that this is not the only option available for negotiating with the Muslim clerics.

MA

Islamabad, Pakistan

1 November 2006

On "Zionists seek to silence critics of US policy toward Israel"

Thank you for the article. I see a concerted effort to silence criticism of Israeli policies, policies concerning war on Palestinians, Rachel Corrie, the 'neoconservatives' such as Furth, Wolfowitz, etc. Very few commentators are willing to write about it. Alexander Cockburn's column in the *Nation* is one of the few in circulation that does so. The censorship practiced is intimidation and it's all the more reason to combat it.

MS

Santa Rosa, California, US

2 November 2006



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