

Letters from our readers

6 December 2006

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

On "Bush-Maliki summit: White House rejects any withdrawal from Iraq"

The past few days have made what we have long suspected more plainly obvious. This Iraq Study Group business has been no more than an election-year vehicle to throw the administration's opponents a bone and create some sort of ineffective moderate PR point to make the Bush bunch look as if they are open to alternatives. Maliki's reactions and the entire visit did help to further show yet another example of the great and growing international disrespect for the United States and its foreign policy. We can only hope that in some way the Bush administration will finally react to this and show at least a pinch of democratic respect for the people of the world.

RV

Athens, Georgia, US

2 December 2006

On "Bush visits Middle East to intensify Iraq war"

The author of the above opinion hit close to home. This is exactly what Bush has in mind. Mr. Bush thinks he is God and a King. He will kill every man, woman and child in Iraq in order to bring peace. I am thankful that I am nearing my useful life on earth. I detest living in America where lies and deceit are the order of the day. Everything that is evil is embraced by Congress and Bush's cronies. Torture, stripping the Constitution, and our protection of free speech and the right to assemble is slowly being removed. The scenario by Mr. Cogan is very real. Good commentary. I support and salute you, sir.

DH

Sheridan, Oregon, US

29 November 2006

On "What the New York Times has learned from Iraq"

Isn't it interesting the way that the ruling elite views the failures in Iraq as a simple mistake made and moves on? Wasn't there outrage at British Generals of WWI who made disastrous decisions that costs many lives of their own soldiers and yet regarded such losses as mere mistakes, a simple lesson to learn and then move on? Is it not also interesting the same people are going to 'move on' whilst

ignoring the death and destruction left in their wake. Never mind they will never stand trial for war crimes for an illegal war. Presumably, they will somehow learn 'something' and then proceed to invade another member of the 'Axis of Evil,' creating more pain and bloodshed. Oh well...

SG

Australia

28 November 2006

On "New York police kill unarmed man, wound two others"

As a white, Jewish woman, I can and *will* say, "This is an atrocity!" How dare these "cops" shoot to kill without a threat?! This man was about to marry the mother of his babies. He is now dead, thanks to the NYC Police. I do hope I am on the jury for the civil case . . . I will award her and the children millions! The police need to stand up for what they have done, admit it, do time and pay! They cannot ruin lives and move on. They need to think about what they do. They need to be punished. (I will be writing to Senator Clinton about this!)

LG

28 November 2006

On "British Airways and the Christian cross controversy"

If BA succumbs to pressure from evangelicals and the Church of England to allow religious jewelry over BA uniforms, then it should allow all religious and non-religious jewelry. Hindus, Jains and others consider the swastika as a sacred symbol, so I don't think we should be surprised to see that symbol when we check in. Is that really what these Christian groups want?

HL

28 November 2006

On "Australia: Union protests provide no way forward against industrial relations laws"

Thank you for providing an article which can and will be used to show workers at both my place of work and that of my partners that their non-participation in said rallies has been understood by somebody, that they have adopted a defeatist attitude only because they have not been shown that there is an alternative course of action to that pursued by, if I may, the labour aristocracy. Basically, it boils down to 'why lose a day's pay for nothing?' If they had our best interest at

heart, why leave it to now when it's too late? The article does a very good job of explaining the why's and wherefores of the totality of the situation.

JH

Rooty Hill, NSW, Australia

29 November 2006

On "Borat: Whose pie and whose face?"

While I agree with most of David Walsh's analysis of the implied politics and profound shortcomings of *Borat* (though I also happened to find the film quite amusing) I was troubled by Walsh's sudden attack on Evangelicals, and his assumption that anything about Jesus must be nonsense. One can be a socialist and still honor the religious beliefs of strangers.

In particular, a diverse working class church like the one depicted in the film seems worthy of more respect. From what I have read, the church members offered "Borat" money and shelter, which he refused, and then he cut that part out of the film, creating an image of a congregation more concerned with theater than with charity.

In fact, he was extended a genuine Christian helping hand. Furthermore, what's the problem with glossolalia, called in the Christian context "speaking in tongues"? It's a genuine form of emotional catharsis long recognized by social scientists and spiritualists alike. The prejudice, unexamined, of Mr. Walsh on the subject of religion detracted from the piece.

DB

Long Beach, California, US

30 November 2006

You've said it all again. I've read reviews of this hideous film and had my suspicions, which you have more than amply confirmed. It seems to resemble the supercilious attitude of Romanian NPR commentator Andrej Codrescu, who loses no opportunity to deliver sneering remarks at those he regards as beneath his contempt, particularly if they do not match his supposed intellectual and political prejudices. This also occurs in his appalling documentary *Road Scholar* (1993). So another European "smartass" appears on the scene to appeal to low and vulgar prejudices as his box-office success sadly shows. But not all of us are fooled, especially the WSWs, which again delivers a very necessary critical and honest evaluation.

TW

29 November 2006

On "For Your Consideration: A disappointing effort"

Everything you said of *For Your Consideration*, I would say of *A Mighty Wind* as well. Labored, light, unconvincing. By the by, isn't it interesting that almost without fail you can tell how good a film is, whatever its genre, by its advertising and/or trailers? Almost by the print ads alone . . .

CM

30 November 2006

On "Profit over the environment: Who Killed the Electric Car?", written and directed by Chris Paine"

There is no such thing as a zero-emission vehicle. Basic thermodynamic laws dictate this. As your article states, the primary source for the electricity powering these vehicles is nuclear, so this only shifts pollution (conventional auto exhaust) from the LA basin to places where the nuclear power plants are located (fission products, trans-uranic elements).

These plants have been in operation for 50 years now and they still have not figured a way to dispose of these lethal by-products of the electric-generation process. So electric vehicles are just a canard, a smoke screen created by the financially and morally bankrupt GM.

The answer to this problem is a publicly-owned system of trains. The roadbed is already set (highways). All that remains is to lay the rails and build the trains. Yes, even electric trains pollute the environment, but on a far smaller scale per passenger than cars. If the Americans are not competent enough to accomplish the task, let's ask for help from our best friends, the Japanese. How many people die as a result of US auto accidents per year? Over 50,000. How many people have been killed in 42 years of Japanese high-speed rail accidents? None. Thanks for the enlightening articles and keep up the good work. Thank you.

AW

27 November 2006

On "Demise of US rail system highlighted by DC-area bridge fault"

Good article. The historical perspective and technical understanding of the North American rail system is excellent. CSX is certainly one of the crummier operators, and has been for years!

RV

29 November 2006

You must know a rail worker to write an article like that. I have been on the rails for 33 years, and most of what you wrote is true. There are still robber barons today. Keep up the good work. Hope you don't mind, I will send this out to the members of the BLE Local 216. Maybe it's time that the unions *don't* help the railroad out for a change.

MS

29 November 2006



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