

Letters from our readers

23 December 2006

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

On "Year-end press conference: Bush sets stage for major escalation in Iraq"

It's Vietnam all over again. We heard this before. The Americans were losing in Vietnam, and Johnson decided to escalate the war. The war continued for a few more very bloody years with thousands more killed on both sides. The Americans in the end were totally defeated and their embassy staff (and their South Vietnamese collaborators) had to escape by helicopters from the roof of the building. The Americans do not want to learn from history.

I see it happening once more in Iraq. We will see soon the escalation stage (this is what I call the denial stage), and then the total defeat after a few more thousands killed on both sides. The same scenario with exactly the same obvious results. For how long will the world put up with the biggest terrorist state on Earth?

AS

21 December 2006

I find an astonishing similarity between Bush's predicament in Iraq and Hitler's situation in 1943. Hitler too was convinced that his Russian invasion would be a quick in-and-out operation, but by this time he achieved only a kind of stalemate. Such allies as Hungary and Romania had lost four divisions at Stalingrad and were not inclined to render further assistance, leaving Germany, like America, alone. Hitler's generals, like the American general staff, began an increasing energetic protest against many aspects of Hitler's generalship, especially his belief in an earlier version of "the surge" that the Bush gang is planning in Iraq. Hitler too gathered together from varied units all that could be assembled and with the backing of a loyal SS General Zeitzler launched his tanks and nearly a million troops against the Soviet army at Kursk salient. This operation called Citadel caused enormous losses to all sides but ended in failure for Germany, as will the still unnamed Bush operation in Iraq. Then the German generals began plotting, as America's generals are doing. One possible consequence of the enormous failure in Iraq, the Stalingrad of American imperialism, is that the generals may try to "save the nation" now that they cannot hide behind the will of the Leader.

AL

Toronto, Canada

21 December 2006

On "Pentagon report paints grim picture for US in Iraq"

Given the current political situation in the United States, combined with the deterioration of the operational effectiveness and size of total US troops and the cobbling together of units, this further design to produce a "surge" in US troops in Iraq through one more massive attack somehow reminds one a bit of a famous order by the German General Staff in 1918. When the war had been lost for Imperial Germany, the General Staff ordered a full naval suicide-type assault by the German Fleet at Kiel upon the British Fleet. That attack famously led to the Kiel Mutiny, which was an opening event of the revolutionary events in Germany from late 1918 to 1919.

JB

20 December 2006

On "Bush administration preparing to boost US troop strength in Iraq"

This article pretty much nails it. Having curtailed Constitutional rights and corrupted the election process, the ruling elite has nothing to fear but fear itself. The stated objectives of this illegal invasion have been accomplished, and now all that is left are the unstated objectives, which are the enslavement of the Iraqi people and the theft of their resources. Much like the Joad family, the Hawaiians, the Cubans, the Native Americans, and the Palestinians, the Iraqi people have made the fatal mistake of possessing something coveted by international bankers and the ruling elite. This whole mess could be settled tomorrow if they would simply pack up and move along quietly before the smallpox blanket trick needs to be employed yet again.

PK

15 December 2006

On "The German chancellor and the Baker-Hamilton report"

In your article you write near the end, "The Baker-Hamilton report, unwittingly, confirms that the US military deployment in Iraq amounted to a war crime."

Please elaborate. Please cite relevant passages in their report, or even inferences, as I can find no substantiation for such a claim in your article. Here, I do not mean to argue that the US invasion was *not* a war crime; I would just like a citation confirming this from their report.

One other item: I would not call the Merkel/Bush exchange a couple months back at the G8 summit in St. Petersburg an "embrace," as you did. The pictures I saw in the alternate media at the time showed, rather, a "grimace" by Merkel as

Bush came up from behind and squeezed her shoulder muscles as she was sitting at a table. My own reaction was that this was a blatantly sexist act by Bush as well as a personalizing act of oppression by a sitting president against an unpredictable ally.

In other words, my own view is that Merkel may be quite the independent thinker, and to describe her essentially as a toady to US interests seems a bit simplistic. Germany as part of the EU in the global race to the bottom has huge issues. An SEP strategy rather than invidious tactics would seem a better course here. In any case, the article was otherwise informative.

DS

18 December 2006

On “Wall Street awards itself billions in Christmas bonuses”

I had to choke my way through being one of the fastest disappearing groups—the middle class. Thanks to all these banks and their interest on credit cards, they have destroyed countless people’s lives and supported wars. They get all this, and the war is costing a million dollars a day. I am just a pawn in their big world power and economy rip-off game! Thanks for writing!

KL

El Dorado Springs, Missouri, US

19 December 2006

On “Christmas cheer for Wall Street executives: Goldman Sachs boss gets \$53.4 million bonus”

One of my great questions of economics is: Why when workers dare to ask for a small rise in their pay checks are they treated as though they were the “greatest thieving scumbags in the world” by the ruling elite?

SG

Australia

21 December 2006

On “Mourning for Pinochet—US establishment shows its affinity for fascism”

Regarding your final statement: “If the corporate and financial interests that rule America were to see themselves losing power to a socialist party committed to ending the subordination of society to private profit and the accumulation of vast personal wealth, they too would search for a fascist general prepared to carry out slaughter on a far greater scale than in Chile.” Surely ‘they’ see the prospect already, hence the necessity for the “War on Terror,” which provides much of the necessary controlling legislation for those seeking to unsettle the powerful and moneyed elite by democratic means. Any attempt at usurpation will be closely aligned to being a terrorist act. It will soon become sedition, if it is not already.

RT

Australia

19 December 2006

On “Britain: High Court rejects Jean Charles de Menezes family appeal”

Thank you for your article with respect to Britain’s High Court rejection of the de Menezes family appeal. I was shocked

and appalled at the brutality of his murder, and I followed the case as closely as I could. I wasn’t aware of this decision until you wrote about it, and for that I thank you, and I also thank you for the background material you included. This is a well written and important news item, another reason why the WSWS is one of the very best newsletters on the Internet.

Much good cheer,

AT

21 December 2006

On “Britain: still no compensation one year after Buncefield explosion”

The Buncefield incident is just another chapter in the catalogue of unsafe operational practices by global oil companies world wide. The operating company of Buncefield, Total, probably led the field in its cavalier approach to safe operational practices. An explosion at Toulouse resulted in several fatalities; the sinking of the Erica and the explosion on board the Betelguise, Ireland 1979, resulted in the death of 57 people. It is obvious that safety precautions were either not installed or not functional. Was the installation manned? If so, why was a tank allowed to overflow for several hours. The company, which operates two refineries in the UK, should be shut down.

TK

Salisbury, North Carolina, US

19 December 2006

On “House repossessions soar amid record debt levels in Australia”

Surely the biggest con being instigated on ordinary people is the scandalous increase in house prices, basically manipulated by the government trashing the economy to raise revenue on stamp duty and inheritance taxes. Now ordinary folks have been lumbered with huge interest only mortgages with no ability to pay these loans. The banks know that a large majority will be repossessed by the lenders who currently this year have profits of \$37.5 billion.

MM

Gold Coast City, Australia

15 December 2006



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