

Letters on the tragedy at Virginia Tech

20 April 2007

The following is a selection of recent letters sent to the World Socialist Web Site regarding our coverage of the shootings at Virginia Tech.

Mr. Walsh, I enjoy your commentary and criticism. However, in the case of the Virginia Tech shootings, as in countless others, it is hardly irrelevant to talk about gun control. That is the missing element from much of the discourse. This young man who murdered so many people was clearly very ill. It was far too easy for him to buy a gun, and one might say that the person who sold him the gun perceived him as a member of the correct social order (a college student, a hard-working Asian with a proper future).

Of course, the media coverage is often terribly exploitive in the usual stomach-turning way, but by analysis of the social roots of the murders do you mean, say, editorials about the inversion of the American dream? How can we presume such a thing? American society does far too little to assure the basic happiness of its citizens, but it also does too little to protect them. The sense of anomie in American society is not disconnected from how it facilitates violence, and this facilitation is not merely figurative.

MB

18 April 2007

I agree that this incident reflects problems in a dysfunctional society. In fact, it appears to me that it simply echoes the over-reaction of the Bush administration and the people of the USA to the 9/11 attacks. Horrific as they were, they provide no justification for the hundreds of thousands of Afghan and Iraqi civilians killed and wounded in the retaliatory rage that has yet to produce much else in the way of results.

TK

17 April 2007

The author mentioned that a former FBI agent, interviewed on one of the cable television talk shows asserted that such incidents were “Part of the risk of

having a free and open society....”

I, a former infantry Marine Corps Lt., would disagree. I would argue that it is safer to have a free and open society. In fact, the event was the price of a closed society, with secrets at the top that no one can supposedly comprehend or have access to in order to chart a course forward.

JB

17 April 2007

There was mass murder committed today—the insane meaningless indiscriminate killing of defenseless innocent people. I am talking, of course, about Iraq, where murder is a daily fact of life, and where the culprit is not a sick Korean kid, but a cadre of suit-wearing psychopaths.

Thirty-odd people murdered in Blacksburg Virginia, today, and the country is in mass mourning. The President is shattered, the media people are unnerved, school administrators, professors, and students, clergy, all of them shocked and distraught. Even the most hardened cops, Feds and others, shaken by the sheer violence, gore, and loss. But this makes for a relatively peaceful day in Iraq—when only 30-odd bodies are dragged away, the wounded in a desperate run to the closest emergency care. This is a day at the beach in Baghdad, or Fallujah, or Ramadi, or Anbar province. Every day is Blacksburg in Iraq, and much worse.

DR

San Francisco, California, USA

18 April 2007

It never fails to amaze me how the media pundits scapegoat guns, movies and videogames for the massacres that occur in this US nuthouse with clockwork frequency. They rarely, if ever, mention this within the context of the wholesale violence loosed upon a defenseless nation, and how this nation invaded and destroyed a weaker nation, killing over 655,000 Iraqi civilians in the process.

We are led to believe the two have nothing to do with

one another, that the madness of the killer at VT was not getting his daily psychological nourishment from the reports of massacres in Iraq. That requires a level of deceit and outright dishonesty that would be unheard of in more civilized nations.

Now we are going to be treated, in ritualistic fashion, to expressions of shock and dismay by politicians, and media pundits, followed by a psychoanalysis of the gunman, uncovering every word he put down on paper and every word he said to acquaintances.

Does anyone doubt that, if Mr. Cho had been in Iraq and had done the very same thing, he would have been hailed by these same politicians and media pundits as a war hero, called one of the nation's finest, and decorated with a chest full of medals?

KK

18 April 2007



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