

More letters on the Paris Hilton affair

13 June 2007

The following is a selection of recent letters sent to the World Socialist Web Site on the June 9 article “The campaign to keep Paris Hilton in jail: nothing healthy about it” and a subsequent reply by David Walsh to letters received in response to the article.

Dear WSWS,

David Walsh’s reply to the angry readers of the Paris Hilton article is appropriate. Ms. Hilton may be a decadent and ideologically lumpenized snob, but she is certainly no war criminal nor should she “die in prison,” as one enraged writer has advocated.

Compared to the burning political issues of the day, Hilton’s infraction is too minor to be invested with much seriousness in the first place. She is a symptom and a distraction, and her foolish antics do not warrant any sort of bloodlust, whether from the left or from the right.

This is, indeed, a person “who might rather be an object of pity” because alienation and social inequality even degrade the minds of celebrities, who are human beings, too. Hilton is also a quite impotent presence before the all-powerful state and media apparatuses.

Mr. Walsh has presented a healthy Marxist response to the Paris Hilton affair. Moreover, he provides an important reminder: “The socialist project for transforming society is not rooted in dreams of revenge. Indeed, socialism arises far more from compassion than from hatred.”

How else can humankind aspire to a truly human existence? The international working class, the revolutionary class, must be motivated by noble, just, and democratic sentiments if it is to overturn capitalism and work towards the abolishment of a class-divided society.

Sincerely yours,

AZW

12 June 2007

I read both the original column on Ms. Hilton and your reply to the various responses that came in. I wish

you to know that this is one reader who found your discussion and analysis to be by far the most penetrating and cogent I have seen of this matter, which in itself probably deserves no attention at all, but is at the same time a striking expression of certain underlying trends. You are entirely correct about the politics of rage and the resulting reactionary results, all too evident in this case. I hope that the WSWS will continue to provide cultural analysis of this sort, something which is for practical purposes entirely lacking in the mainstream press and media.

I should add as well that the WSWS political commentaries, especially on the US situation, where I have enough knowledge to form some judgments on my own, are nearly always significantly more worthwhile and accurate than almost anything I read elsewhere. Please keep up this valuable service and know that there are many who derive significant value from it.

Sincerely,

FC

12 June 2007

I couldn’t believe the obscenity of at least Fox’s coverage of the event. I was at a fire station—and firemen are truly a noble bunch, of and from the working class—and they were of course offended by the special treatment given this rich young woman. Still, I found your analysis unimpeachable, especially as to the overall political confusion amidst a “seething” anger.

Three plus soldiers a day are dying in Iraq—along with the seemingly infinite crimes of those in charge—and this is the only sort of thing that gets people exercised? Certainly, Ms. Hilton is a lightning rod, meant to draw the fire—a political accounting—away from those who truly deserve it. The anger to me seems a good thing in a way—an opportunity to engage the majority and get on with the larger political education for the polis? Keep up the good work.

RM

12 June 2007

You strike to the heart of the matter with this paragraph:

“Let us ask our angry critics: If Paris Hilton were to serve her entire sentence, what wrongs would be redressed? How would the world be a better place?”

Truly. Watching the cynical rejoicing at her “downfall” has been an interesting experience. However, it does not go beyond “she’s just a rich bitch getting what she deserves.” The gleeful expressions about someone of her class “finally getting punishment” speaks volumes about the outrage—misdirected—of seeing people such as the Enron executives, the Bush/Cheney administration and other high-profile criminals get off with a slap or—more frequently—a total lack of charges being brought.

Paris going to jail will not solve this situation, or any other. While I do not pity her, I do see that she is not the root of the problem here.

CMS

12 June 2007

I read your article on your arguments over the Hilton case. You made points which I respect. Now I would like for you to know the humble story of a family who desperately tried to have a loved one released so he could spend his last days of life to be with his family but died alone at the twin towers facility on 6/10/07. My uncle David Solano Gonzalez was an inmate with a drinking problem that led to DUIs and his arrest. He made mistakes, yet they were so unforgivable that even with a doctor’s order that he didn’t have much to live due to cancer in his liver was not enough for the judge to have compassion for him or us, she chose to go on vacation rather than to make a decision to release him or not until the doctor himself testified.

She must have thought there wasn’t such an overcrowding problem that they needed his corpse to take count. My family was angered and disappointed in the Hilton case not for her wealth or being a celebrity, but that her condition was so superior to my uncle’s terminal illness. We ask ourselves, “What was the exception in her case that wasn’t in his?” For our family our fight to release him fell on deaf ears and now we plan a funeral. Our pain only grows deeper—his own mother is unaware of his passing and we will have to tell two elderly parents that the justice system plays favorites.

AAM

12 June 2007

Why are you making any reference to Paris Hilton? Fluff. Leave her to Jay Leno.

RLB

Brandenton, Florida, USA

12 June 2007

I agree wholeheartedly that the anger and vitriol directed at Paris Hilton, the vacuous socialite, is all out of proportion to her deeds. The vitriol, if it is going to be directed anywhere, should have been directed at the politicians for their role in the invasion of Iraq and the sociocide carried out there.

A couple weeks back, Leonard Pitts, a syndicated columnist, wrote an angry column about Paris Hilton, laced with bitterness and hostility. The whole time I read this I thought his readers would have been better served if, instead of attacking Paris Hilton, a celebrity with no socially redeeming qualities, he had leveled the anger at Bush and the Congress for their responsibility for the pain and suffering they have caused in the Middle East.

It is really quite something to watch the media get their britches all twisted up in knots over Paris Hilton getting off lightly for a petty traffic offense. What a joke! I have to say, in closing, that the surest sign of political maturity, and literacy, is when one stops taking corporate news, such as CNN, Fox, ABC, etc., seriously.

KK

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