

Letters from our readers

21 March 2008

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

On “Shades of 1929: Bear Stearns collapse signals deepest crisis since Great Depression”

This article was excellent, concise, and accurate. However, you failed to mention the coming environmental collapse and general environmental degradation as part of and a contribution to the global financial collapse.

LR

18 March 2008

This is *great work*. Somewhat scary but still eye-opening and informative.

CE

New Orleans, Louisiana, USA

18 March 2008

On “Politically directed dragnet snares New York Governor Spitzer”

Friday I read an article by Greg Palast that was similar to yours. I want to compliment you on your measured and reasonable flow of facts and logic. I am sickened that this man has been removed from his position of exposing the real criminals of Wall Street. With the terrible news about the bailout of Bear Stearns on Friday, I believe that once the meltdown begins, those caught in it will rue the day they were so eager to see Spitzer hung out to dry. As someone else commented, next to the Bush gang, he is a choirboy. I am glad I stumbled onto this site. I now plan to visit it often.

WM

16 March 2008

On “Guantánamo prisoner refuses to cooperate with military show trial”

Excellent writing revealing the degenerate state of “military justice” (an oxymoronic term!). A presentation of the facts. An analysis of the facts. The analysis confirmed by revealing quotes.

JW

Santa Monica, California, USA

15 March 2008

On “Massive NSA operation exposed as Congress prepares vote on domestic spying bill”

The situation is far worse than you describe. Intelligence agencies do not have to ‘start somewhere.’ They can use intelligent software and Social Network Analysis in very complex ways. They can look for ‘emergent properties’—certain kinds of behaviour, activity, or social phenomena—and then determine who the actors are, who the key fulcrums are, and, in the case of those who are using anonymous methods of interaction, they can use the contextual information generated in order to zoom in and focus with greater precision. It is Big Brother.

I have studied Social Network Analysis, AI, and complex systems for 10 years and this experience leads me to a strong prediction that this is what the NSA is doing. The fact that they have the world’s best mathematicians is no coincidence. Radical activism is the real target, as you well know. Investigate this issue more deeply!

AM

11 March 2008

*On “Redacted: *Outraged but schematic*”*

This is the best of the reviews of de Palma’s *Redacted* I have read from the “external reviews” page of the IMDb. It is interesting to see how the American reviewers have approached the film (Ebert non-committal; la Salle enthusiastic; most others scornful). Your review seems more accurate in its understanding of the film’s strengths and weaknesses. I often read WSW’s film reviews, sometimes, I admit, in order to marvel at the ingenuity with which the ‘socialist’ angle is worked into the piece, but here you have found the right balance.

The final, horrific image of the film is clearly staged, and a deliberate contrast with those preceding it, which I take to be real. Those who remain in the cinema to

read the credits can be in no doubt that it represents Farah, the victim of the rape, and that the staring eyes and frozen scream are the 'redaction' of de Palma himself. The contrast with the blacked-out eyes of the preceding victims is marked, and raises uncomfortable questions about what we should censor, and why.

IG

15 March 2008



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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