

Letters from our readers

6 May 2008

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

On “British government commits taxpayers to bailing out the banks”

Thank you, Jean, for your very important article on the depth of the financial crisis in the UK, that further elucidates its wider global implications and the pronounced sharpening of class antagonisms that must result.

DD

Melbourne, Australia

4 May 2008

On “The California budget and the crisis of public education”

Although I write to mention a correction I think is advisable, rest assured your news organ is the *only* one with which I am familiar that truly tells things the way they are plus *why* they’re that way. Even liberal progressives step back from the brink of admitting our system as it stands works only for the rich.

It’s probably time for me to start identifying as a socialist. I come from poverty and, due to the addiction and mental illness that was my inheritance, have never risen far above it. But I was blessed with intelligence and have seen what goes on in the belly of the American beast with some perception.

My criticism is this: In the current article on Republican gutting of popular education in California, your writer speaks of “the two wars” America is waging. Perhaps I’m just misinformed, but I didn’t know this country was at declared war with any other. Please correct me if I err. It *is* engaged in the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. The “wars” resulting in America’s colonizing of both societies were won years ago.

As a writer, I hold accurate definitions as indispensable to clear thinking. Should you be referring to the “occupations,” why not call them what they are? I believe the fascists currently in power here prefer that

they be called “wars” (though they meet no standard definition for such) because this term glamorizes and spreads the cloak of patriotism over the sorry spectacles in progress.

The word “war” suggests comparisons to past heroic, democratic endeavors like World War II, the Civil War to emancipate the slaves, as well as America’s numerous other colonial efforts. “Occupation” suggests Germany’s Occupation of (fill in the blank) or the USSR’s Occupation of Poland, et al, in 1945 and after.

There is no glory in occupation. No enemy to overcome; merely a native people to exploit.

I think Bush, Inc., collectively smirks whenever publications call their imposition on sovereign states *war*. Hubba, Hubba, Bubba. “Look at me, war chief, flight suit, aircraft landings.”

Forgive me if I misconstrue what you do. I am quite sure you would never act to perpetuate a fascist fraud.

Respectfully,

BK

Seattle, Washington, USA

3 May 2008

On Josef Frizl

While Austria is not complicit in Josef Fritzl’s crime against his family, his actions may have implications for future generations. There is a parallel here, an eerie echo of the holocaust. Consider Fritzl’s inhumane incarceration of his daughter Elisabeth 24 years ago and his subsequent incarceration of three of their children.

The crime is horrible and fascinating, and it has captured the attention of the world because it is so chillingly reminiscent of Nazi atrocities—his threat of gassing those who attempted to escape, the feral nature of his underground bunker, the death and incineration of a dead baby, even the selection, three children upstairs while three others remained imprisoned below. Why? For what purpose? Fritzl does not say. There is no remorse. He once remarked to his lodger of 12 years, Mr. Dubanovsky, that one day his cellar would

make history.

Is it possible to believe that the devastation, havoc, and ideology that overtook Europe between 1939 and 1940 will simply fade into history, or will it continue to haunt us flaring up again and again like the Black Death once thought to have been eradicated, but suddenly reappearing threatening us all with its contagion?

Fritzl's sister-in-law hated him, local children were told to stay away from his house, food was seen being taken into the cellar, which his own wife was forbidden to enter, and yet no one knew what was going on. No one cared enough to say, enough. Stop. What is happening?

Perhaps this story should serve as a warning that if we continue to commit such crimes, to kill civilians and devastate the planet to satisfy the few, if we insist on starvation and slavery for others and exist only for ourselves, like Fritzl concerned only with the banal and sordid details of our own existence, then we too can expect to reap what we sow.

KL

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