

Letters from our readers

18 July 2009

On "A cover-up of US massacre at Mazar-i-Sharif"

Thank you, thank you for this report on the massacre of the Taliban back when it was fighting the Northern Alliance. Most people don't have much of a memory of that. The moment I read the story line, I thought of young John Walker Lindh and how this might affect his situation. He survived the containers, the attempted drowning and burning, the terrible treatment and vile taunts of the American forces after capture and then imprisonment. Is there any chance that this revelation, finally, can obtain his release?

Marius

13 July 2009

On "France: Racist campaign against burqa threatens democratic rights"

So much for the human rights declaration that these politicians jump up and down about. Seeing that Muslim women who live in western societies wear the niqab as a display of their piety—i.e., they choose to follow the dress dictates of their religion—to legislate a ban on them from doing so is to deny them their right under this declaration to practice their religion. It would also seem the outlaw biker scene in France must be very docile compared to here in Australia.

John H

15 July 2009

There was a reaction to the anti-Burqa campaign from the Indian Muslims, too, in the Indian Press in the form of letters to the editor. But, as expected, they all are from a religious point of view that was against Islam, not realising that the campaign was a step towards creating a division among the common people. The anti-burqa campaign was preceded by anti-turban and later by anti-scarf steps in schools, to create a European version of Saudi Arabia, where Islamic practices are enforced on non-Muslim immigrants too.

Prabhakar

India

14 July 2009

On "Once again: Iran, imperialism and the 'left' "

This article raises the issue of whether the *Nation's* dismal performance over the past decade (if one stops there) can be attributed to actual infiltration of the magazine by the CIA or other intelligence manipulation, of the kind that Carl Bernstein wrote about in the 1970s, and perhaps to the magazine's complicity in that infiltration. Nothing's shocking, and Dreyfuss's politics are consistent with such phenomena. Max Holland's piece for the magazine in 2006 on the JFK assassination provides another example, virtually slandering Mark Lane and other famous critics of the Warren Commission as per se "conspiracy theorists" or "assassination buffs," who, in turn, in letters to the editor, have skewered Holland for his connections to the CIA, and then the magazine for hosting him. The Holland article and Lane's response can be viewed on the magazine's Web site in, respectively, the February 20, 2006, and March 20, 2006, editions. These relationships obviously are not trivial, and are factors to consider in any class-based critique of the magazine, or as an element of such a critique.

C Ronk

15 July 2009

The *Nation* are truly a reptile breed as Trotsky called them. Absolutely nothing progressive can come from such people (especially Obama cheerleaders like they the *Nation*.)

Chris

New Zealand

15 July 2009

While I can appreciate your line of reasoning, what your article basically ends up being is nothing but a complaint about Dreyfuss's credentials and position on

the matter, rather than on the real issue, which is the rights, privileges, and equality experienced by the workers of Iran. Workers probably didn't protest for the same reason they don't protest in the US—fear of starving to death for lack of a job...or, in their case, fear of death or disappearing. So rather than spend all this energy combating someone that is less left, why not spend all this energy talking about the workers, who they are, what they need, and what it takes for Iran to move away from a theocracy to a true democracy by and for the workers? It's tiring to constantly hear nothing come out of the communist and socialist groups and camps other than in-fighting and complaining.

Workers of the world unite!

Dissentus

15 July 2009

On “New York: Threat to close Stella D’Oro after 11-month strike”

What I would say additionally is that the capitalist class, in general, thinks that capitalism is how society is to be organized forever. In addition, they carry the thought that what has always worked in the past to increase profits will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

This perspective of the capitalist class spells extreme danger for the working class because in fact as capitalism progresses, the possibility of making profit declines. Thus the capitalist class will drive society to ruin. In fact, given the number of impoverished people in the world today and the precarious environmental issues, you might say that the capitalists have already succeeded in bringing ruin to man and the earth.

The thought has occurred to me that the number of members of the worldwide capitalist class is shrinking and can thus persevere with a declining rate of profit. That is, the rate of profit is in decline, but the total profit is shared by a declining number of people so that their gross income does not suffer. If this is so, then you would think that such a system is doomed to fail soon. Somehow, a very small class of people is able to control things, apparently.

The size of the capitalist class is speculation on my part. But it would be interesting to find out if in fact the number of people making up the capitalist class has diminished through the 20th Century.

Peter L

Maine, USA

14 July 2009

On “Death squads and US democracy”

Death squads go back a long ways. I met the two masterminds in Vietnam—William Colby and Blowtorch Komer. The main henchmen were John Negroponte and Col. James Steel. They refined the technique in Honduras and San Salvador and then set up the suicide bombers in Iraq and Afghanistan. If it were I, I would begin with Negroponte. Cheney is priority number four.

ED

14 July 2009

While the story about CIA death squad/assassination squads is of great interest and significance to the working class for many obvious reasons, I think that the notion that this was the program revealed to Panetta (supposedly) in June is fallacious.

Friday, the inspector generals’ report was released, which sheds some limited further light on the massive surveillance program carried out by the Bush administration since 2001 (which could be part of the so called “echelon” programs, or an outgrowth and institutionalization of those?).

At any rate, I think it worth mentioning in the context that the (apparently open secret) death squads were the “big secret” told to Panetta on June 23/24

RS

14 July 2009

On “Whatever Works: The results are unattractive”

Great essay about the decline of Woody Allen. Too bad for his sake he doesn't read your site.

Greg S

New Hampshire, USA

15 July 2009



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