

Letters from our readers

30 July 2009

On “Bush administration considered using military to arrest ‘Lackawanna Six’”

Thank you for this article and for telling the truth of what happened to the Lackawanna Six. If only the mainstream media had the courage to report the truth of the story of these young men and how they were scapegoated by the Bush Administration’s “war on terror.” I know people in their community, and the impact was devastating. These unfortunate young Muslims are spending their lives in prison for no reason other than a youthful mistake. It is terrifying to think that the government can do this to anyone, at any time.

Mary S
New York, USA
27 July 2009

Penetrating analysis. I would just add that the Bush administration also used Hurricane Katrina to further legitimize, and reduce legal impediments, to the introduction of troops for policing.

I wrote this for a study on New Orleans, which you might find useful:

“Another example, of the national State strengthening its control over local State repressive apparatuses, is the John Warner Defense Authorization Act of 2007 (P. L. 109-364), passed by Congress, and signed by President Bush, in October 2006. The Act ‘reformed’ the 1807 Insurrection Act, by greatly expanding the grounds for employing US troops domestically, and, in effect, annulling the 1878 Posse Comitatus Act, which bars the use of troops in local law enforcement. Under the new provisions, the president’s power to declare a public emergency and station troops within the US, and take control of state-based National Guard units without the consent of the Governor or local authorities, has been greatly expanded to include broadly defined ‘public emergencies.’ The precipitating event that provided the opportunity to deepen this trend of greater centralized control over State repressive forces was the conflict between President Bush and Louisiana Governor Blanco over control of the Louisiana National Guard in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina. Other initiatives, such as Operation FALCON—Federal and Local Cops Organized Nationally—created in 2005 to carry out federally directed joint operations, to the creation of local Homeland Security offices, to Title XIV of the Warner Act, entitled, ‘Homeland Defense

Technology Transfer Legislative Provisions,’ which authorizes “the Secretary of Defense to create a Homeland Defense Technology Transfer Consortium to improve the effectiveness of the Department of Defense (DOD) processes for identifying and deploying relevant DOD technology to federal, State, and local first responders,” such as crowd control technology to suppress dissent, are all expressions of the expansion of State repressive forces, greater control over these forces by the national executive, and, ultimately, the legal basis, and military/police infrastructure, for a dictatorship.”

Jay A
27 July 2009

“Specter of a police state”? Have the editors at WSWs forgotten that Abrams tanks and other military equipment were used to kill a bunch of religious nuts in Waco, Texas? “Almost” using the military is a far cry from *using* the military as a “motor pool” for “all your repressive needs”.

I in no way support the Bush administration or the militarization of law enforcement in this country, but this militarization and the erosion of Posse Comitatus Act didn’t begin under the administration of G.W. Bush.

Since at least the 1970s, we have seen so called SWAT teams who, it could probably easily be shown, were created in response to the self-arming populace of the black ghettos in the form of the Black Panther party of Self Defense.

It was after the panthers armed themselves, in fact, that we saw the first attempt at gun control in California, which was passed in response to incursions of armed black militants onto the “turf” of the cops as well as into the “turf” of the crooks in Sacramento.

R Schock
27 July 2009

On “As jobless claims rise, Wall Street celebrates corporate profit reports”

Although you are absolutely correct in your analysis that profits have been somewhat restored thanks to the aggressive slashing of jobs and wages, I tend to think that the recent market surge is an expected phenomena after the initial collapse. But the capitalists may be a little overly exuberant over their ability to thrust the economic crisis onto the backs of the working class. By no means do I think that the crisis for the capitalists is over. They may run the markets another leg up, but eventually they will realize that massive amounts of bad

debt still remain combined with the lack of any impetus for real economic growth. That reality should bring the markets cascading back down. I suspect they will come all the way back down to the lows and eventually break those lows.

I know it's hard to fund a working class party through donations. Many of us are so financially strapped that we need every dollar we can get our hands on just to make it through the end of the month. But if I were the Socialist Equality Party treasurer, I'd wait for the markets to exhaust themselves to the upside and start to roll over, at which point I'd begin to feather into the S&P leveraged short fund (SPXU) all the way back down to the lows. I don't know why we can't use the capitalist system to fund the movement to end capitalism.

Trevor
24 July 2009

On "The Hillary Clinton doctrine"

The Obama Administration has taken another scary turn on the road to a possible world war with the "Hillary Clinton doctrine." Another factor to consider as a motivation for a US nuclear umbrella over the Middle East is recent inter-imperialist rivalry.

The *World Socialist Web Site* had reported, in an article posted June 19, on France opening its own permanent military base in Abu Dhabi and committing to use all military means to defend the United Arab Emirates, which could include nuclear weapons. This would not require such weapons be stationed in the UAE as France has submarines.

The recent French move to rejoin NATO is not a submission to the US policy but an assertion of its own interests, as is its policy for a union of the Mediterranean. The French imperialists may be motivated by their loss of oil contracts in Iraq after the US occupation.

I remember a Cold War television drama from about 1960 that portrayed a global nuclear holocaust beginning in the Middle East. (I think in that scenario it was an accidental missile hitting Egypt from a Soviet-US plane confrontation over Israel). While the US strategic interests in the Middle East remain the same, the comparative decline in its position in the world makes US military policy more desperate. The progressive alternative is socialist internationalism.

HL
25 July 2009

On China and the dollar

Dear Comrades,

Here is a link to an article in the *Scientific American* online magazine referring to a proposal by China for a more 'symmetrical' sharing of the world currency powers, to include such currencies as the Yuan. It's an interesting article.

Since the reconstruction of economies previously sent to ruin during the Second World War, forcing the collapse of the Bretton Woods agreement, the US was forced to share its currency power, including raw material and cheap labor resources, political and economic control of third world and

small economies. This change too has seen the collapse of any temporary agreements between these, such as GATT.

It would be interesting seeing how this develops. The last time China demanded its currency to be considered as a definite contender in the world stage, it led to the collapse of the bubble 'Tiger' South East Asian economies. What I wonder is whether this decision was a work in progress preceding the recession, or whether it is a bluff considering the collapse of the American market by an economy in just as big a crisis.

Comradely,
AJ
26 July 2009

On "Obituary: Joe Strummer of The Clash, dead at 50"

You write, "During the mid-1970s the main avenue for rejection of the pompous, over-blown monstrosity known as Progressive Rock being championed by the large record companies was in the rhythm and blues pub circuit."

Oh come on. Prog rock was awesome and on a much higher cultural level than punk. I was raised in the hardcore punk scene, way more emotionally attached to it than prog, but prog is interesting, experimental, and frequently played by musicians with a background in classical and jazz. It's pretentious and silly at times, but it rocks like crazy, and if you're a fan of the strange time signatures and scales of post-bop jazz, you'll love prog.

Way to respond to a 6-year-old article, I know.
Nick P

26 July 2009

On "Obama administration bars torture investigators from Guantanamo Bay"

Obama is complicit in all the war crimes of Bush & Cheney due to the fact that Obama continues with the same illegal torture of illegally kidnapped persons who are then illegally renditioned by secret transport to USA operated prisons in other countries for the pleasure of Bush, Cheney, Obama, et al.

When will the world stop being controlled by Obama (dictator) and the illegal American government?

Paul W
27 July 2009



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