Letters from our readers

27 August 2009

On "Lockerbie: Transatlantic row worsens over Megrahi release"

The legal issues aside, for the US to wax indignant over the release of Megrahi, the suspect in the Lockerbie bombing, and to point its finger at Libya for the hero's welcome Megrahi received, is another example of the pot calling the kettle black.

When George Bush returned to Crawford, after 8 years of terrorizing the world, killing over one million Iraqis, according to the British based Opinion Research business, he, too was met with cheering crowds, waving American flags, when he stepped off the plane.

Megrahi, if he is guilty, only killed a couple hundred Americans, but Bush killed over one million and has not spent a day in jail. Which is the worst outrage? Bush getting off scot-free and being met by cheering crowds or Megrahi being given an early release due to terminal cancer? One only has to have a sense of proportion to come up with the correct answer to that.

Keith K
25 August 2009

On "Former Wehrmacht officer condemned as war criminal"

I don't see how we can let this pass without calling for the need to prosecute most US officials over Iraq and related conflicts. Reprisal killings of the sort referenced have a long history as part of the pattern of occupation powers dealing with troublesome populations, to at least as far back as Teddy Roosevelt's time in the Philippines. The language has changed some as the trials of German and Japanese officers forced some shift in the way that later US officials described events in Indochina or similar places, so as to avoid analogies with people already brought to trial. I'm sure most Italians will detect some rank hypocrisy in any comments that US officials may make about the prosecution of a German officer for executing Italians as a reprisal measure, while US officials carry on with the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan and advance into Pakistan.

Patrick M
24 August 2009

On "The Hurt Locker: Part of a deplorable trend"

I was reading your review of the new film *The Hurt Locker* where you mentioned Chris Hedges' ideas about war. Mr. Hedges has written a worthy book called *American Fascists*, which is all about the odious machinations of the Christian fundamentalist Right, but his notions of attitudes to war irritate me. He seems to subscribe to the common view that places a lust for war in general human nature rather than in social conditions and propaganda. There may be certain individuals who have an innate lust for blood that remains strong and can perhaps even be strengthened by firsthand experience of war. I'd be tempted to describe these individuals as psychopathic.

But I think that most of those who have a fascination for war may be examples of the "chicken hawk syndrome," i.e., they are obsessed with the idea of war and often are the first to bay for blood but have never, and probably will never, experience war first hand. Furthermore, such fixations are obviously encouraged by a media obsessed with gore, and if you add the anxiety and anger that results from an increasingly gloomy economic situation then Hedges' perceived bloodlust can be easily explained.

It is difficult to imagine a terminally wounded and dispossessed Iraqi civilian having much of a passion for war.

George M
Scotland
24 August 2009

On "Australia: Growing opposition among Victorian paramedics to Brumby-union sell-out deal"

This article is spot on. I would like to see this appear in the *Age* and the *Herald-sun*. Our fellow Victorian's have a right to know that AV and our government are

© World Socialist Web Site

prepared to risk our lives by further reducing already stretched resources rather than improve the conditions of all of our hard-working and grossly underpaid paramedics.

Jodi B
25 August 2009

On "Obama mortgage plan aids banks, not homeowners"

It is not news that there are hundreds of thousands of troubled homeowners in the country. It is not even news that the lenders refuse most who request help. But, are you aware of the fraudulent practices that the lenders are using to deny loan modifications?

Here is my story:

In July 2007, we re-financed with Countrywide in order to get out of an ARM that was about to go up astronomically.

In order to get the loan through, the value of our home was appraised over what it was really worth. In addition, only my husband's name was put on the loan since the credit cards are in my name. The loan is an interest only ARM that does not include taxes and insurance. The payment is $3407, and my husband takes home $1300 per week. I am a stay-at-home mom with two young children.

In September of 2008, we were struggling to pay our bills. The value of our home was plummeting. We weren't behind yet, but were about to be. We pro-actively contacted Countrywide in October 2008 and asked for help.

Here is a time-line of events:

October 2008—Sent Countrywide hardship letter. Husband withdraws $25K from his retirement fund to pay bills. This money must be repaid quarterly—$1000.

December 2008—Countrywide refuses loan modification without a reason.

March 2009—Obama plan underway. Contact Countrywide again. They say they can't help because we make too much money, because they added husband's net income to his gross income and used that figure! Request that they re-open our case.

May 2009—Told by Bank of America that they will not help us since it is not their fault we are over-extended.

July 2009—Contact Bank of America's Barbara Desoer to request a loan mod. Cannot pay August mortgage payment. Faxed new hardship letter and required documents.

August 2009—Assigned new Bank of America negotiator.

August 21, 2009—Bank of America calls to inform me that our request is being denied. They informed us that we meet all of the requirements under President Obama's HAMP program, however, because my husband borrowed money from his retirement plan (which is depleted, and we are still repaying), we do not qualify for a loan modification. They said that we are current on credit cards and car payments and therefore do not fall under the guidelines for assistance.

This is outright fraud. The HAMP stipulates that retirement accounts cannot be used to determine financial status and, in addition, being behind on anything (credit cards, mortgage, etc.) is not a HAMP requirement.

The lenders feet must be held to the fire! If we continue to let this happen, our country will be in worse shape than it is now!

Joanne
New York, USA
23 August 2009

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact

© World Socialist Web Site