

Letters from our readers

10 December 2009

On "How many Afghans will die in Obama's war?"

Thank you for asking the question that no one else has. Liberals shed crocodile tears in the 80s over the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Now they don't even bother to raise the question of Afghan deaths. It's an atrocity, and a disgusting irony considering the circumstances of America's birth. The focus in the corporate media has been almost entirely on American deaths. While I submit that one American dying in Afghanistan is too many, I'm utterly appalled that the bloodbath about to be unleashed on Afghanistan is never discussed in those terms. So thoroughly are the media and intellectual elites in this country tied to the bourgeoisie that they are incapable of even raising such questions.

Nick P

7 December 2009

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All accounts I've seen of US and US-allied forces in Afghanistan and Iraq point out that there are as many, or more, civilian "contractors" in those countries than regular military troops. The accounting for this category of war victims is even more opaque than for the military deaths and casualties.

I haven't even seen much in the WSWS on this topic. I'd like to see discussion of the contractor aspect of the problem in future articles dealing with matters like troop levels and the military death toll.

CH

Texas, USA

7 December 2009

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I expect that Obama's Afghan surge will likely be sold by the press as the same kind of success that they all say Bush's Iraqi surge was. Most "insurgents" will

hide their weapons and wait for the surge to pass. Things will appear more "stable." In the short term.

In 18 months' time most of the "progressive" Democrats who expressed doubts at first will "admit" that Obama was right, just like Obama now says that Bush's surge in Iraq was a "success"—he voted against it as senator. The party's rank and file who still oppose the wars will let themselves get suckered by the argument, "If you vote third party, you're wasting your vote."

Lloyd G

South Dakota, USA

7 December 2009

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Just One More Surge

2,000-plus-year history of empires trying to conquer Afghanistan: The Indus, the Kushan, the Scythians, the Parthians, the Saffarid, the Ghaznavid, the Ghorid, the Timurid, the Hotaki, the Durrani, the Aryan, the Persians, the Sassanids, the Hephthalites, the Huns, the Mughals, the Arabs, the Turkic, the Hazaras, the Khwarezmid, the Mongols, the British, the British (again), the British (yet again), the USSR.

And then of course there is as always, Rambo: "Just one more surge!"—America

As always,

Frans

Thailand

7 December 2009

On "The Coen Brothers' A Serious Man: a suburban Job"

It seems to me that the film is a critique of the inadequacy of Larry's complacency. "I didn't do anything," he says again and again, as if that should preclude him from all the bad stuff that keeps

happening to him. But not doing anything isn't enough, either philosophically or politically. I don't think the Coens endorse his passivity at all. It's also worth noting that the ultimate, almost apocalyptic disaster that befalls him comes precisely at the point where he does cross a line, taking the bribe that he made insufficient efforts to be clear of. Doesn't that make this Coens movie ultimately a serious moral work?



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Tom C
6 December 2009

On "At least 118 killed in Russian nightclub fire"

This is an excellent and revealing article. It is particularly important in light of the fact that here in the United States the infrastructure is being allowed to deteriorate for many of the same reasons. The billions for the banks and the trillions for imperialist war and occupation in the Middle East and Central Asia have bled the treasury dry. Now, using the plea that "there is no money," sthe Obama administration is continuing to ignore the need for works projects that would provide jobs for the huge number of unemployed Americans and at the same time upgrade and maintain the country's vital infrastructure. It is not difficult to imagine the consequences of this policy. It will look very much like what is happening in Russia now.

Carolyn
California, USA
9 December 2009

On "Russia proposes new organization of European states"

Good article. Yes it's certainly true that in Europe old alliances are fading and new ones growing. I think you are correct. The Russian proposals are a long-term investment. They are assuming a further decline of American Imperial reach. They are assuming that the Afghan strategy will fail, and that this debacle will result in a further fracturing along the Europe/USA fault line.

Chris
Ireland
9 December 2009