

Letters from our readers

4 February 2010

On “The real state of the union in 2010”

Today I had the misfortune to watch CNN commentators for about 20 minutes. By the end of the 20 minutes they were still parroting and agreeing with the government official in Louisiana who stated to the press that the New Orleans school system was better due to the Katrina disaster.

Suddenly, it occurred to me that I had not been watching journalists in the sense of the word that I had once thought I had known. No, these men were pitchmen for the government, posing somehow as journalists. It occurred to me what Fox and CNN has become—an infomercial for the government/corporate, 2-party viewpoint. No longer do journalists even seem to subject statements to any kind of criticism. I was reminded of the scandals of a few years back when a “journalist” or two were found to be in the direct employ of the Bush Administration and their Department of Education. Could this kind of thing be happening again, or is it the same thing—a sign of who pays their salaries?

JB

30 January 2010

I wish to thank WSWs for publishing comrade Barry Grey’s essay on the true State of the [USA’s] Union. I was put off by Obama’s excessive use of euphemisms in his address to a joint session of the Congress. I’ve learned to use WSWs as my source of truth in economics and other things. As I read Obama’s words, I felt that I was reading a fairy tale.

Obama built a verbal Potemkin village to fool us. Obama’s façade fools no one. Where is a real structure to replace the economic structure that fell on 9/15/08? We are due accurate answers to the question, “Whither the USA?” If I want fairy tales, I’ll use the MSM. As Sgt. Friday often said, “Just the facts [Pres. Obama].” When I want facts I use WSWs.

Larry L

30 January 2010

On “Obama’s State of the Union Address: Cynicism, clichés and a call for austerity”

Dear WSWs:

I wonder how many Americans would appreciate how “spontaneous” the reactions of their Congress people to the State of the Union address really is. If only they knew.

Sound bites of Congressional commentary on SOTU are made to look as if they were given immediately after the President’s predictable and deliberately duplicitous remarks. Worse, such commentary can be presented “just in time” for the local Eleven O-Clock News.

What a coincidence.

Earlier in the same day, public tours of the Capitol building are conveniently steered away from the basement. There, an impromptu news studio is set up out of sight from the public eye. Having most of the day in which to do it, representatives get in short lines to be interviewed by some “hair-do” who asks each elected official the exact same question:

“Congressman (Congresswoman, or Senator)—your reaction?”

Which means they’ve read Obama’s final draft of SOTU that was sent over from the White House the week before.

No posturing here. Yeah, right! Nancy Pelosi can wear sackcloth and ashes in the Capitol basement when appearing “one on one” for the MSM and still have time to slither into a designer gown for prime time TV.

Our legislators can also do up-to-the-minute polling—as well as post to web sites like Twitter—for the correct posture to adopt “after” the speech. No one in Congress wants to back verbatim the ever more gutless appeals by Obama for ordinary Americans to make more painful sacrifices for the extremely fortunate. Not if advanced warning gives Congress every opportunity

to make nebulous responses to his BS. And spin even more mindless rhetoric about an economic recovery that doesn't exist.

All this is just another nadir of cynicism. Worse, it demonstrates just how naive legislators think the American people really are.

Which WSWS pointed out so accurately in this article.

Bob R
Missouri, USA
1 February 2010

On "US group charged with child trafficking in Haiti"

You have to ask yourself: What if Cubans had tried to abduct these children? The media frenzy would probably have obliterated every other story coming out of Haiti.... Isn't it truly magical, the power of religion?

Stephanie N
2 February 2010

On "Britain: Unions lobby Parliament to line up behind Labour"

Excellent article on the decay and implosion of the reformist left in Britain. The thin layer of trade union bureaucrats and Labour Party MPs, who are forever striking poses but never supporting strikes, will not be able to keep Labour afloat. When the election is lost, the bribes and privileges will follow. The decline in Labour membership will accelerate. They are indeed widely hated and nobody knows it better than themselves. The Labour Party will leave government drenched in Iraqi blood. A party of Imperialism. A party of war criminals. And that is how millions of people think of that retched band now. The party of Blair, the party of Brown. The War Criminals Party.

Chris
Ireland
30 January 2010

On "Me and Orson Welles, but too much of the former"

Fantastic review! Thanks for putting him in his true historical context, and allowing him his humanity.

Phyllis
Pennsylvania, USA
31 January 2010

On "Immokalee USA: Bleak but sympathetic view of migrant farmworkers' conditions"

Only people that didn't live in Immokalee and have family trying to survive in a life like this would think it isn't true. Like the man said, "If it weren't for these people, America would starve"...and other things.

Immokalee child
31 January 2010



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