Letters on the Tucson shootings

13 January 2011

On "After the shooting in Tucson"

This is the best analysis of the shooting in Arizona I have read heretofore. It is brilliant.

I have been waiting for days to read something or hear something on radio with insight as rich as this. I have come up empty. I listened to the show "On Point" with Tom Ashbrook. Normally a good show, even taking into account the ideological limits imposed upon it from without. But there was no commentary linking the economy to the shootings. I listened to CNN. Nothing. Although I'm less surprised by that. And even "Democracy Now," hosted by Amy Goodman. Nada.

After hearing days of empty rhetoric, I set out to pen an article to make the links between social discontent, angry talk shows, and the shootings in Arizona. I made a couple of false starts to make the linkage but soon gave up. If I had penned the article I had intended to write, it would have mentioned the very points made in David's article. I am just happy to finally read something that mirrors my own views, if for no other reason than it serves as a form of psychic healing.

I really liked the point that "the right has monopolized the politics of anger and social discontent." No kidding. And the social discontent has an underpinning in the current state of the economy.

This whole incident has reminded me of a couple lines in a Bob Dylan song "Masters of War." The "they" Dylan refers to could very well be the financial oligarchy who are pulling the strings of everyone.

They fasten the trigger
for the others to fire
Then they stand back and watch
as the death count gets higher

I am going to post this article far and wide. Everyone should read this!

Thanks, David, for this wonderful, wonderful article. This is a masterpiece.

Keith K
11 January 2011
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Per usual David, right on the money. Analysis of these types of events is your forte. Thanks again.

CR
11 January 2011

On "Arizona assassination spree tied to political right"

I would like to sincerely thank the WSWS for the reasoned and thoughtful response to this latest shooting in Arizona. A sane commentary amongst the media's sound and fury is most welcome. I am disgusted by seeing every media personality in the country come out of the woodwork to sensationalize, commodify and thus trivialize this tragedy. A 22-year-old American shoots twenty innocent Americans and we find ourselves deluged in constant media hype jammed down our throats. Yet when a 22-year-old American shoots twenty innocent Afghans, it's business as usual. Men, women and children are labeled as Taliban with the tragedy suppressed and covered up. Is a human life not a human life all the world over? Senseless violence is the American way.

Clearly there is a virulent disease present within American culture and society. How many crazed lone gunmen does it take to establish a pattern? One hundred? A thousand? A hundred thousand? The media message is clear. Are you lonely? Uneducated? Unemployed? Alienated? Then kill some innocent people; we'll make you infamous; your life will finally matter. Your value will be splattered all over the airwaves; at least
until the next commercial break.

I value a society that cares about all people. I hunger for a culture and government with goals for decent nutrition, health care, education and work for everyone. I desire a community where everyone contributes and everyone wins. I hope for a more socialist future for us all. Keep up the good work.

Best Regards,
Erik
Missouri, USA
10 January 2011
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Thank you for your article and the perspective analysis by Barry Grey of this tragic and criminal incident. It provides a very needed insight, most lacking by the media sources of the ruling class.

Eulogio B
10 January 2011

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On "Media whitewashes ultra-right in Arizona massacre"

"Loughner is undoubtedly disturbed, but he was calm and responsive Monday afternoon at his arraignment in a Tucson federal court" you wrote. I think this is an important point to make, that although he is clearly disturbed, it is not the same kind of suicidal, personal despair that afflicts others that have shot up their places of work, schools, churches, etc. This act was something else. It was not a place of work, school, or a church, for one thing. It was a political gathering. For another, he was prepared to "assassinate," not commit suicide. In fact, he was trying to reload and escape when he was tackled at the scene.

The WSWS's analysis of the Oklahoma City bombing is worth revisiting on this score. The far right speaks in barely coded terms of war and celebrates a "militia" culture—which is actually nothing more than domestic terrorism and vigilantism, especially in the Southwest. Sarah Palin has a reality show largely devoted to the shooting of high-powered guns for sport and apparently some perverted sort of machismo. There are other celebrity political figures that do the same. Sadistic, xenophobic, racist. Lucky for them, the official policy of the Obama administration is much the same, especially when it comes to the rights of immigrants. The Democrats have played not a secondary role in creating this extremely dangerous climate.

EG
11 January 2011

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Oh, yes, it's because he's deranged and only because he's deranged! It's a nice cover to try and obscure the underlying causes of this tragedy—but I'll bet that won't translate into funding mental health care, because everyone knows we can't afford it.

Christie S
Oregon, USA
11 January 2011

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A few hours ago I sent this e-mail to Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Democrat from Florida:

Dear Congresswoman Wasserman Schultz,

I saw you on Chris Matthew's "Hardball" this evening. The discussion was of course about Saturday's shooting in Tucson, Arizona. Matthews asked if inflammatory language used by politicians and pundits was a motivating factor for the shooter.

You said, "we have to tone down the rhetoric, we have to really look inside ourselves.." and then later something about "checking ourselves" and "we've got to dial it back." Other Democrats have spoken similarly.

My question is, why—in this context—do you use the words, "we" and "we've" instead of "they" and "they've"? What have you ever said that could be interpreted by anyone to mean, "go shoot a member of Congress"?

I don't expect a reply from her, but the whole thing reminded me of the many times I've read on your site about the need of the Democratic Party to constantly protect the Republicans, to keep the whole system intact. I guess to her the Democrats, Republicans, the *Nation* magazine, the *New York Times*, Fox News, right wing radio...are all in it together.

Greg S
New Hampshire, USA
11 January 2011

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(Note: Just 90 minutes ago, Reuters is headlining the CBS poll that reports: "57 percent of respondents said the harsh political tone had nothing to do with the shooting, compared to 32 percent who felt it did.")

The spin came early when Yahoo News featured a Fox story that ended with anecdotal remarks from a person alleging the shooter was a liberal or socialist. Since, The Fox-Right-Tea machine was busy convincing the public that the real "victim" of this "liberal-biased media" was Sarah Palin.

John McCain called the shooter of home state Rep. Gabrielle Giffords "a disgrace to Arizona, this country and the human race." That is a true statement. Those Mr. McCain neglected to include in his indictment were his former running mate, Sarah Palin, and political extremists in his own party and state.

The single voice of objectivity I heard was that of Pima County Sheriff Clarence W. Dupnik, who condemned the "atmosphere of hatred and bigotry" that had gripped American politics. Sheriff Dupnik was widely denounced by Republican conservatives and the Tea Party for his remarks.

Let it be said, Sheriff Dupnik, that many outside your county, state and nation consider you: An honor to Arizona. An honor to your country. And an honor to the human race!

May voices like yours never be still.

Michael B
Maine, USA
11 January 2011

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