

Letters from our readers

22 March 2011

On "No to imperialist intervention in Libya!"

After reading your article it made me wonder how much cruise missiles actually cost, I discovered that each one costs about US\$600,000. It is interesting that we cannot come up with enough money for health care or tuition or fixing bridges...those are *not* in the budget. Meanwhile they spread the cost of these missiles among the three forces (France, Britain and USA) that are dropping missiles in Libya to hide the cost of them from the electorate. Just last night I read there were 112 of these dropped on key targets in Libya—so apparently these *are* in the budget. That's like \$5.5 billion over night! If asked how much USA is spending on this, our government points to the *other* two forces to suggest that they are the ones doing the most spending to make it seem like "a real bargain"...while the *real* cost is covered up.

So getting it straight in my head—it seems the government issues bonds (IOUs) to its central bank, a private company. In England it's called the Bank of England, in France it's called Banque de France, and in the USA it's called the Federal Reserve. This central bank creates money that has never existed before, with an electronic flick of the switch, and gives it to the government, which spends it on the missiles. The central bank deposits the bonds in its reserve and is allowed, via the fractional reserve system, to lend 10 times the amount of the bonds to the public (loans for cars and houses)—all at interest. On receipt of those electronically printed dollars the government has created a huge debt that the public is paying back to a private company on money that was created out of nothing!

Shouldn't a government be printing its own money—debt-free money? While they declare they want to *spread democracy*, can any of these three countries dropping cruise missiles on Libya be considered *real* democracies? Is democracy really based on who controls the money supply...and who pulls the stings?

Jill P
Oklahoma, USA
20 March 2011

Good article. You are certainly right on the startling breakaway of the German government. Detaching itself from another European Imperial folly. The long run consequences for Europe are incalculable. Already in the Euro Zone Germany is the decisive power. Now the German government again publicly opposes the foreign policy of the USA, as tweaked by the governments of UK/France. As to the policy itself it appears to have been launched with startling incompetence. The BBC is reporting that Gaddafi's forces previously outside Benghazi used the time after the UN resolution to prepare and launch an attack on the city. A predictable response since outside the city they would be quickly

destroyed by air power. Once inside the city air power will be largely neutralized. Honestly I can't see how the new Western Imperial policy is supposed to work. From the air friend and foe will be indistinguishable. And every other 'allied' death on the ground is likely to be from 'friendly' fire. And if air power fails, will that provide a political basis for the intervention of Western troops? Perhaps the answer lies in the decline of the USA as Imperial hegemon. Now UK/France see the chance for some petty Imperial play of their own, to assert their local role as enforcers of the interests of European Capital. What is clearer every day is the decline of the old Western order, even on its doorstep.

Chris
Ireland
19 March 2011

On "UN vote clears way for US-NATO attack on Libya"

Yes Bill, factually perfect. The oil-rich east of the country (where the opposition is holding) has to be secured by the colonialist powers before Gaddafi gets there first.

The Libyan people only want help regardless from where it comes, but there again so did the innocents who were slaughtered in Gaza, S. Lebanon, and as you remarked correctly, Ivory Coast..

Innocent lives were never part of the equation when it came to exploitation by western imperialists, as history has shown all too clearly. On the subject of history: How will it be taught to future generations on this matter? I rest my case.

Philip T
Germany
18 March 2011

Several articles on the WWS have been saying that a war on Libya was coming. It is now a reality.

The military assault on Libya which has just started is another bloody, western imperialist war of aggression against a poor country.

Apparently western governments want to protect Libya's civilians. It is as if other governments are not killing civilians in the region. How hypocritical.

The war is indeed more about the control over oil and stopping the rebellion of workers and younger people in the region from being more anti-systemic.

Also: what better way to divert attention from western governments'

attack on the political and economic rights of their own people, thousands of whom languish in jails, than to start another war?

The governments launching the assault on Libya have been saying that they do not have money for education and health care, etc., but how are they finding the money to support a war now? Liars.

Peoples of the imperialized countries must understand that this war, like the wars before in the recent past, just signifies the fact that imperialists can destroy any country they like in their own political and economic interests.

Real national liberation from imperialist forces, including the imperialist companies and institutions is something the working class in alliance with the peasants and other democratic forces, in every peripheral country and in the world as a whole, must fight for as a part of its uninterrupted fight for a world beyond capitalism.

As long as there is imperialism, this endless war syndrome will not go away. It has to be made to go away through massive anti-imperialist and anti-war democratic mobilization led by the working class in poor and rich countries.

Raju
Ontario, Canada
20 March 2011

On "Ohio governor proposes massive cuts to social spending"

I work in a long-term care facility and right now we are trying to crunch numbers and are planning on taking away services and staff and benefits to employees.

Unemployment is currently 9.2 percent but it is not just about losing jobs, it is also about the degradation of health and retirement benefits for the average person who does have a job. That is coming next, guaranteed.

Kasich is a scourge to the state of Ohio, a Gordon Gekko among governors, and is selling everything that isn't bolted down...

Ben C
Ohio, USA
20 March 2011

On "Desperate efforts to prevent full meltdown at Fukushima"

You have provided better coverage of what is happening in Japan than any other source I have consulted. This is consistent with your excellent reporting on other key subjects as well. My compliments!

Hank G
18 March 2011

On "Japanese emperor calls on the nation to 'share the burden'"

A great article summing up a lot of important points. Your whole coverage of the current Japanese tragedy is excellent to read. Even within

Japan it's difficult, impossible I should say, to come by such objective info, put into larger historical perspective. You have won a lot of trust with this splendid, timely coverage both with me personally, and with others I've had the chance to share your articles with.

ML
18 March 2011

On "Japan disaster to intensify global economic contradictions"

Dead civilians in any crisis are seen as an investment opportunity by the vultures of "free" enterprise.

Richard C
18 March 2011

As I sat helpless to rescue the hundreds of thousands of Japanese left homeless, starving and freezing, I watched the "watchers", the international news organs, and digested reader comments. The most distressing aspect apart from the disaster itself was the focus of Reuters, for example, that placed more emphasis on science and markets than lives! I said as much to them. "Important as it is to know the science surrounding this tragedy, we must balance this with reports about *people* and their welfare." What are governments and NGOs doing? It is not enough to know that the Bank of Japan is injected billions, we must know who is injecting rescue! By Friday, 18 March, as the dire situation worsened, the Japanese story descended to second place in national headlines to highlight and champion Washington's newest imperial venture: Libya.

We have before us not only a possible nuclear meltdown, but a world meltdown of human compassion as markets and war trump the untold tragedies of massive deaths and destruction, homelessness of hundreds of thousands, pain of starvation from little food and no water, and the trauma of losing all material possessions—occurring before our eyes with little regard or response from other nations, and, to date, no helping hands. While Katrina, Haiti, the US Gulf, and now Japan should serve as wake-up calls for humanity to unite, solve its problems together and save the planet from ruthless and selfish forces set in motion by greed, markets and blind addictions to technology, we instead find the West diverting energy and money to another Iraq-like invasion while market speculators devise strategies to profit from the cataclysm in Japan.

Unless people of the world reverse this trend of destructiveness and do it soon, we are surely doomed.

Blessings to the people of Japan, and to all of us. Because *we are all one*.

Michael B
Maine, USA
18 March 2011

On "Letters from our readers"

To Peter M, on your letter dated the 17th of March, on "Who is responsible for the nuclear catastrophe in Japan?"

I think the point that Patrick Martin was trying to make is this was the outcome of the capitalist system itself. In which rival nation states are in competition with each other to secure the energy resources needed to produce goods and that all is done to produce a profit for the paymaster.

We can see in recent events the disaster off the Gulf of Mexico in which BP put the mighty dollar first before safety, putting many families out of work and sending small businesses to the wall. Also potentially sending a whole ecosystem down the tubes.

Japan is a disaster that was made far worse by a system bent on making a profit at all costs. Whether it be a cheaper plant, or a plant on a fault line, or both.

Patrick Martin makes a very important point that the vast economic resources of modern society must be taken out of the hands of the financial aristocracy and put at the disposal of the entire population. Rational planning must replace the anarchy of the market. The harmonious development of the world economy must replace the struggle of rival nation-states. This means the struggle for international socialism.

Julian H
21 March 2011



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