

Letters from our readers

12 April 2011

On “New York Times demands escalation of killing in Libya”

When the opposition to Gaddafi erupted, we were supportive, seeing it as a follow-on from the events in Tunisia and Egypt. These were fuelled by a genuine hatred of oppressive regimes and an aspiration for freedom. The fact that these aspirations were ill defined was understandable given the lack of open politics in these countries. In the case of Libya, many doubts have emerged and yesterday’s rebels are referred to as “rebels”. The same people are risking their lives to fight the regime but are now corralled behind an ever more clearly pro-imperialist leadership.

Recently (19th March), I turned up at a meeting in Sheffield called by the SWP in solidarity with the movements in the Middle East, with a panel of several speakers from different countries including Libya. Emphasis was on the humanitarian aspects. The chairperson made a pro-forma statement indicating disagreement with the no-fly zone, a view obviously not shared by others on the platform, and the meeting then agreed to set up a web site in solidarity with the struggles. I have no further information on this solidarity network.

I drew attention to the fact that the West would be seeking allies among the opposition, and the Libyan speaker—evidently with links to TNC—replied that the leader was a well-known liberal lawyer, and that others in the council had been elected. In the circumstances it is hard to see how elections would have been conducted without prior planning. Since then, of course, links with CIA have emerged, but we do not know how representative this is.

We still know next to nothing about any political

programmes of either the leadership or the base of this rebellion. We can make some conclusions from the behaviour of the leaders, but what do we know about the social composition of the base? Huge numbers of workers left Libya when the crisis erupted. What remains that could be described as a movement by workers? Those who took up a struggle against the regime with genuine, if ill-defined, aspirations may yet regret being drawn into alliances with the West. The absence of political programme and perspective is a critical weakness that could soon prove tragic for those in the fighting.

Mike M
England
9 April 2011

On “US Senate discusses sending troops to Libya”

Yes, reaction always wants blood, then more blood. But let’s consider countervailing forces. At the height of the current Syrian crisis, every other regional tyrant, including Saudi Arabia, offered support to the Syrian regime (see Al-Manar web site). These regimes are threatened by the revolutionary process underway in the Middle East, but also threatened by a successful NATO intervention in Libya. The Saudi regime in particular is alive to this threat, and can already foresee a future NATO intervention in Saudi Arabia in support of indigenous “democratic” uprisings once Saudi Arabia is surrounded by Western “democratic” surrogates. Consequently, I doubt the Gaddafi regime will have any trouble securing either arms or funds to continue the fight. And may even enjoy a complete military triumph. Furthermore, the Saudi oil tap may be turned off as well as on. And this may account for the sudden decision by the US to drop out of Libyan military action. Britain and France could now face an alliance of Libyan military forces, Middle Eastern despots and Saudi black gold. In that case, they will be

lucky to secure the future of the people of Benghazi.

Chris
Ireland
10 April 2011

On “The Lincoln Lawyer: A morally ‘gray’ attorney and his discontents”

I was interested to read David Walsh’s review of *The Lincoln Lawyer* and considered it to be spot on.

As a great devourer of crime fiction (member of local library), I have been disturbed for a number of years at the trend in American crime fiction towards the promotion of vigilantism and the hatred of anyone who does not support American imperialism. The novelist as propagandist comes to mind.

Michael Connelly’s book *The Nine Dragons* is a classic example, and I now find myself unable to read any more of Connelly’s books. I understand that Mr. Connelly has a living to make, but surely there are alternatives to this sort of prostitution.

David Baldacci’s *Deliver Us from Evil* is so filled with extreme violence that I had to stop reading it. Violence does not worry me that much, it’s the endorsement of extreme torture that does; I worry about where Americans are heading when I read this stuff. Theodore Dreiser and Richard Wright were able to tell us stories about America that rang true. Why do modern-day fiction writers find this impossible to do? (Sarah Paretsky is excluded from this comment.)

It is increasingly difficult within the globalisation of modern society to find a balanced and thoughtful view of what is happening around us. It seems easy to write about the political, but the social is left to languish.

Diane
8 April 2011



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