

# Letters from our readers

10 May 2011

On “*The death agony of American democracy*”

This article encapsulates a very sad story of American decay. I have a gut “reaction” against David Brooks, who tries to candy-wrap his loathing for democracy as unbiased and broad-minded. Since I never read him I was disgusted to learn that he had written (as noted in the article) that Americans (those affected by Medicare cuts, etc.) should not expect their government to fulfill their “immediate needs” right now. Is this cretin aware that millions of Americans are out of work? We’re talking about food and a place to live, in so many cases. It is outrageous that the *New York Times* supports such class-driven treacle.

I was not glad about the assassination of Bin Laden but was not aware until reading this article that a *Times* columnist had condemned an Israeli assassination of a Palestinian leader in very vigorous language. The comparison between that reaction and the current media hype for getting the targeted Bin Laden is well wrought and brings the reality of decay over time home. This article gives a vivid example of decay.

Frances H  
9 May 2011

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Dear David North,

The article is stellar. It embodies so very well not only the ideals of the SEP but also the ideals of what constitutes the principles eroded by an entity which should be preserving them.

The statements in “The death agony...” presents a two-fold problem. First, it is so true and strips bare the false and corrupted opinions of that press, where, secondly, this statement will not appear and that lack of appearance is more than a failure of policy. ... That policy furthers the drumbeat, the iron heel at home and

abroad.

I am struck at how the mentor to the turn of American thought and policy is the Zionist state: ever more surveillance, justified assassination, secret operation, incarceration without trial, torture, military crime, a press to serve the state, a militarized society, propaganda. If the United States is viewed as the protector mother country and Israel its colony, the difference being one is a religious state-run government and the other is a state-run corporate government.

Michael S  
9 May 2011

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David,

Thank you once again for so clearly elucidating the ongoing crisis of capitalism. Given capitalism’s basic antagonism toward democracy, this ruling class’s reactionary path shouldn’t surprise any student of socialism. What I find alarming is the increasing openness of these views and their increasingly bellicose tone. I’m concerned that this open flouting of legal and democratic restrictions signals a growing belief among the ruling class that they are becoming untouchable. We all need to redouble our efforts to disabuse them of their feelings of omnipotence before they destroy our society and this world.

RW  
California, USA  
9 May 2011

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The lasting significance of the OBL hit is that political murder is now an open and official policy. If, as the experts tell us, international law, the law of nations, is based on the law of contracts (this is part of what The Peace of Westphalia established when it ended the real first world war in 1848), then, Peace

shredded, all nations now have the legal option to pursue political murder as official policy. While such killing has always been an unofficial policy of some States—a status that generally and officially kept the genie in the bottle—the transition to a putative legal methodology of murder opens this dark door to any State, any Nation. It legitimizes murder-as-policy, and gives to all States the option to kill, to murder any person or group—presumably on any scale. Obviously this excludes no one. Not you, not me. And, interestingly, the leaders of States are themselves now subject to this new law. Well, perhaps that was the real goal, to invite “attack”.

AB  
9 May 2011  
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Yes, excellent article. The American oligarchs have turned their fire on the ‘Huddled Masses’ as their enemy within. If you read the poem that goes with the phrase you can see how American imperialism has worked to over throw the foundations of the Republic. And while there are many new things under our sun this isn’t one of them (see Wikipedia for the history of the Roman Republic that preceded the reign of Emperors). As befits the modern Capitalist world the imperial cycle now turns at a faster rate.

Chris  
Ireland  
9 May 2011  
*On “Gulf allies: A record of repression and torture”*

A belated appreciation to Kate Randall and the SEP for this article and the series to which it is a part. Sometimes an overview, a history or a defining such as these, from the standpoint only offered by the SEP is most illuminating. Well done.

Michael  
6 May 2011  
*On “US football player targeted for criticizing celebration of Bin Laden killing”*

Thanks for this article. Throughout the whole of the US’s run in the World Cup there probably was not a

tenth the amount of national chauvinism as there was compressed into the two days after Bin Laden’s death on Sportscenter.

Anybody who’s ever been to a sports game has probably experienced this sort of jingoism first-hand. At basketball games, hockey games, football games, baseball games, during breaks in the action the home teams never miss a chance to trot out some soldiers and solicit cheers on their behalf. Depending on where the game is played (for example, the sterile environment at Cowboys Stadium), this often draws the loudest cheers of the game. In general, the worst offender in this regard are the Chicago Blackhawks, whose fans began cheering nonstop during the national anthem during the Gulf War, spurring a tradition which continues to this day.

Tom A  
7 May 2011  
*On “One in seven Americans receiving federal food assistance”*

I really think that it is a shame that we can fund wars but so many people cannot find jobs and have to rely on the food stamp program. And to hear that that might be slashed is a disgrace. I happen to be a taxpaying citizen, and I would love for my money to go towards our own people. It’s really a shame and a disgrace.

Sylvia  
Ontario, Canada  
6 May 2011



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