

Letters on Juan Cole

18 August 2011

On August 5, Professor Juan Cole, a University of Michigan professor of Middle Eastern history, posted a comment on his Informed Comment blog slandering the World Socialist Web Site with the lie that we support the Gaddafi regime's efforts to retake eastern Libya and would welcome a massacre of Libyan civilians.

The WSWS issued "An open letter to Professor Juan Cole: A reply to a slander" on August 10, answering his lies and demanding a "full and public retraction" on Informed Comment. Cole replied with a one-sentence e-mail that merely reiterated his slanders. The WSWS responded on August 16 with the comment, "Professor Cole 'answers' WSWS on Libya: An admission of intellectual and political bankruptcy." Below are readers' letters on the exchange.

It is disappointing, though not entirely surprising, that the cheerleaders for the NATO intervention in Libya cannot articulate the positive outcomes of that invasion—because there are no positive results. The infighting, sectarian killings and openly pro-imperialist character of the Benghazi-based TNC are there for all to plainly see. The craven character of the TNC exposed means that the war's vociferous supporters, including sadly Professor Juan Cole, are scurrying for cover, and lash out wildly at any logical, well-grounded criticism of the pro-imperialist objectives of this intervention.

Well done on keeping the debate about the political issues, and not debasing the debate with puerile insults, juvenile point-scoring and name-calling, which is what passes for most political discourse in the United States and Australia.

Rupen S

16 August 2011

You are indeed being charitable when you describe Professor Juan Cole's reply as the reply of someone

drunk. I should think it's the reply of someone suffering from dementia. (I apologise to any WSWS staff or readers with friends or relatives who actually do have dementia.)

Jennifer H

16 August 2011

I am chuffed you went after the sleazy Professor Cole. I was so shocked when he came out for the Libyan "intervention" that I stopped reading anything he wrote.

It came as a *huge* shock that we would say something like that. Women and children are the biggest losers during and *after* a war. How could he? What kind of person could justify what was going on?

Glad you gave him a good shove and should he be more condescending, please push back again.

Virginia S

Minnesota, USA

16 August 2011

Unbelievable. Playground bully response. Makes me think of some Peewee Herman routine. It's not just Cole. A segment of online experts out there seems to be very disoriented. Maybe we should pity those who became easy "stars" during the GWB era and now have no way to go anymore.

More importantly, though, they are still misleading too many readers lacking other sources for their information. I've been looking around and can't find anything public about this particular issue. I guess keeping other viewpoints hidden is the preferred method for maintaining one's supposed "expertise."

I'm tired of waiting for Truth to win.

What else can we do?

Thank you for fighting.

Georgia B

California, USA

16 August 2011

I asked “Democracy Now” to bring Mr. Cole on to defend his attack of WSWS, as Cole is a regular contributor to their program.

I hope they ask him, but with his response above, I doubt he would come on “Democracy Now” to debate WSWS.org.

Kim H

16 August 2011

Seriously? I mean—really? This is what he has to say? Not even a sad attempt to spin things; no attempt at “Well, you know, when you say something like____, you lend support to the murderous thug Gaddafi”?

What a ridiculous figure Juan Cole has become.

Christie S

16 August 2011

To become famous as a “scourge” of product X raises your value to the owners of X. And raises your final purchase price. It’s an old, old trick in the bourgeois realm. “Friends are cheaply bought but opponents come expensive” is a foundational axiom of the actual hegemonic social code.

P.S.

I’m glad WSWS is being attacked. It means people are starting to listen. Of course, the attacks are unscrupulous; isn’t that a necessary condition for bourgeois politics?

Chris

Ireland

17 August 2011

Just to let you know that I wanted to post a comment on Juan Cole’s blog, to no avail. See my text below, and the blog’s response. Seems the professor does not wish to receive “undesirable” comments....

Professor Cole,

As a colleague blogger (*Geopolitiek in perspectief*, a weblog on world affairs writing in Dutch and English), just [wanted] to let you know that I am deeply disappointed in your changed attitude that first appeared with the developments in Libya. I don’t know why you changed camps. I do know that you have been attacked just about half a year ago, but others volunteering criticism on the international adventures of their government were, too, but kept a straight spine.

I am particularly unhappy about the way you seem fit to deal with the reaction of the *World Socialist Web Site*. That is not befitting for a scholar. It is not too late to change hearts, professor.

Paul L

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16 August 2011



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