

Letters from our readers

13 October 2011

On “The legal implications of the al-Awlaki assassination”

“The legal implications of the al-Awlaki assassination”—the best article I have ever read in WSWs.

Robert R

10 October 2011

Some further feedback about the US extra judicial killing of political opponents, including the media.

George W. Bush is an admitted murderer. In his 2003 State of the Union Address he said that over 3,000 “suspected” al Qaeda operatives had been killed outside the rule of any law—“they are no longer a problem for our friends and allies”. Suspects murdered. No trials, no apology, nothing.

Bush was prepared to murder innocent civilians quite knowingly and especially his critics. In the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, Al Jazeera’s Kabul office was bombed by an American “smart bomb” in what was officially described as an accident. Journalist Ron Suskind spoke to US military sources who confirmed, however, that the bombing was deliberate, to “send a message” to the media organization. The order almost certainly came from the White House.

In a further incident in April 2003, during the Iraq invasion, Al Jazeera’s Baghdad office was hit by a US missile, killing one person and wounding another. The network’s chief editor said: “Witnesses in the area saw the plane fly over twice before dropping the bombs. Our office is in a residential area and even the Pentagon knows its location.”

Further, two British officials were charged under the Official Secrets Act for leaking a classified memo to the Daily Mirror where it is alleged that Pres. Bush, in an April 2004 meeting with Tony Blair, had discussed bombing the headquarters of Al Jazeera in Qatar. Blair reportedly talked him out of it. Now Qatar is a US ally

and the journalists are civilians. The claim appears to have some substance since the officials have been charged and they would have been unlikely to leak a false claim in the face of such serious consequences. So there you have it...Bush planned to murder innocent civilians in a country allied to the US who were just going about their daily business and he was prepared to do so solely on the basis of their political views and their status as media representatives.

Hillary Clinton also gets a guernsey for supporting the extrajudicial killing of political opponents:

In 2009 Honduras was subjected to a military coup followed by a campaign of violence against supporters of the overturned government. Union activists and journalists were gunned down in the street by government death squads. Neither the UN, nor most other South American governments, bothered to attend the rigged elections held in November 2009 but it was enough apparently to satisfy US sensibilities. Obama and Hillary Clinton have since decided that this corrupt, murderous junta should be welcomed back into the international fold.

“Now it’s time for the hemisphere as a whole to move forward and welcome Honduras back into the inter-American community,” Hillary Clinton said shortly after.

At the same time—and with no apparent sense of irony—the US state department released a harshly worded statement chastising the Venezuelan government’s “continuing assault on the freedom of the press,” while announcing the resumption of military aid to the government of Honduras.

Yours sincerely,

Damien H

10 October 2011

On “Ex-SDS leader seeks to herd Wall Street protest behind Obama”

What I thoroughly expect to see is most supporters of

Obama in the last election falling back on their previous mistake as if it is again the right answer. Just as in the last election, I expect to see support for him based on shallow promises of things to come instead of on concrete actions that he has already taken. We'll be told that the Democrats—any Democrats!—must be voted for because strategically nobody else can win against the Republicans. Last time they told us that Obama could not be any worse than Bush. Time has proven these people wrong, yet they still cling to Obama because he is the team they chose, just as they support their old college football team and will never deviate. There is over a year until the 2012 election, which is plenty of time for Obama to roll out progressive reforms in this country, but that isn't going to happen. I foresee a year of empty promises being made instead, which his followers will lap up like warm milk. I don't understand this intractability by Americans, but I can't deny that it exists. I doubt that any see the irony that they professed to vote for "change" they could believe in.

Troy J
Arkansas, USA
12 October 2011

On "Putin to run for Russian presidency"

There are a number of crises coming to the boil in Russia. First, the US reset has not stopped US military plans for building ABM systems along the Russian border. These systems make a first nuclear strike on Russia a more "practical" option. Second, western imperialism is now affecting Russian military exports. First Libya was lost; now Syria is threatened. Third the ruling Russian elites face a legitimacy crisis. It will be a pyrrhic victory if their candidate gets 70 percent of the vote. But only 30 percent of the electorate bother to vote. Fourth, the crisis that follows from the economic decline of the USA. China has now become Russia's largest trading partner. In the next few weeks Putin will make a trip there, where he enjoys, according to reports, greater support than Medvedev. So Putin returns. And his return indicates that the Russian elites correctly believe that the world in general and theirs in particular has become less safe.

Chris
Ireland
10 October 2011



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