

Letters from our readers

19 January 2013

On “ The theoretical and historical origins of the pseudo-left ” Excellent and important. Thank you very much. As the crisis unfolds and the importance of these organizations to capitalism’s continuation grows, there should be concise and compelling historical accounts of groups that feign support for the working class’s historical mission. The SEP and WSWS are the only ones who can do this. Looking forward to distributing this.

Gabe E

17 January 2013

On “ France continues to bomb Mali as Islamist opposition forces advance ” It appears to be a case of déjà vu, as Hollande is doing an Obama: military aggression without discussion with the Assemblée (Parliament), against the specific wording of the Security Council resolution, clearly a dangerous game, which the ruling circles are engaging in. Despite the support of the major French political parties, and silence of the Communists, NPA, pseudo-lefts and the unions, there is an air of anxiety. The state-run TF2, complained that in Europe, France is virtually isolated, and there is widespread anger at the botched hostage rescue attempt in Somalia, where two special forces commandos were killed, along with the hostage (a French special forces operative).

If the game was to deflect the public attention from the growing poverty and joblessness in the French working class, the war in Syria, and the plunging popularity of the government, it has succeeded brilliantly! But at what cost? This present conflict has the potential to involve the US and Britain, as they strive for influence in this 21st century “scramble for Africa” and the “containment of China.” This military aggression, will, no doubt, widen regionally, much the same as the Syria “conflict.” On a wider scale, this indicates an eruption of militarism among Western powers throughout the world, from Obama’s “pivot” to East Asia in order to contain China, through the Afpak

war and Syria, to North Africa and Maghreb.

Already Hollande has instituted the anti-terrorist programme, called “vigipirate”, at level orange, just under red, which enables heavily armed police and military to patrol all public spaces, such as airports, supermarkets, museums and such tourist icons as the Eiffel Tower. So far, apart from some passersby being interviewed, it appears that the public is grateful in being “safe,” while there are massive street protests against the “socialist” government proposal to legalise homosexual marriage, a polemic being tirelessly promoted by the French government and the media.

Who said that propaganda doesn’t work among a politically savvy population?

Mirek

Australia

16 January 2013

On “ Hands off Mali! ” The deployment of the French Foreign Legion (FFL) into Mali is a throwback to the filthy colonialist era, but it has its apologists in the US mass media.

An article by William Langewiesche in the December 2012 issue *Vanity Fair* article entitled “ The Expendables ” is a whitewash of the history of the French Foreign Legion, and, in effect, serves as stealth recruitment for unemployed and disaffected workers who want to experience its “dark romance”.

Langewiesche reveals his misanthropic and crypto-fascistic outlook with this observation: “[The French Foreign Legion] is more of a pure form of addressing the realities of combat and war, to get beyond the political rhetoric and the posturing and that sort of thing...”, adding “normal people having normal little lives don’t tend to go join the Foreign Legion—it’s too tough.”

If you listen to National Public Radio (NPR), you might have heard a subsequent December 12, 2012 interview with Langewiesche by host Robin Young of “ Here and Now ”. The exchange between these

“journalists” showcases their left-liberal “concern” for this tool of colonial wars, feigning sympathy for the FFL soldiers. Revealingly, both these articles feature colorful and inspiring images of FFL troops that might easily serve as enticing recruitment posters. The treatment of this subject by Young and Langewiesche served to “soften up” public opinion in the United States for the impending military assault by the French government under reactionary President François Hollande and his Socialist Party.

Langewiesche provides listeners with this ominous caveat: The French Foreign Legion enlistees have to be “tough enough” because these “former inmates and fugitives”, who are attracted to the FFL, will be sent on “very, very difficult missions”. The people of Mali, much like the Afghan people during the past 11 years, are about to experience one of these “missions”.

Randy R
Arizona, USA
16 January 2013

On “Columbia geophysicist Klaus Jacob on Hurricane Sandy ” I am glad that Klaus Jacob’s interview followed an earlier WSWWS article on climate change. The research noted in the first article concluded that carbon emissions must fall to pre-industrial levels and that carbon emissions must “peak and decline within the next few decades, and ultimately fall to zero.” The conclusion suggests that survival depends on de-industrializing human society. The later interview provides an interesting counter-point. Here, Jacob suggests that social inequality is the biggest barrier in meeting environmental challenges, and he uses Bangladesh to illustrate how social inequality has produced problems “even under normal circumstances.” In short, Bangladesh—as most everywhere else for that matter—doesn’t need less industry; what is needed is social equality that would produce rational investments in industry and infrastructure. Jacob neatly sums up our current dilemma: “Science is the easy part. Politics and economics—that’s the hard part.” So at the very least, we should cautiously assess the political solutions that some scientists suggest must flow from their research and studies.

Dan Canada
18 January 2013



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