

Letters from our readers

5 September 2013

On the World Socialist Web Site

I just need to say: keep it up! This world needs to be educated more about what is the most ideal system, not just to enable, but also preserve general welfare for all people and populations, not just merely benefit the ruling minorities of rich elites.

Best Regards,

D

The Netherlands

30 August 2013

On "Britain's vote against Syrian military action provokes political crisis"

As you are aware, since the NSA revelations, the novel that has been a ghost at every media feast is *1984*.

Now *1984* has two sides, not just the Total Surveillance Society. Consider the sequence: Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Lebanon, Iran.... It is potentially an endless list of imperial Western wars. Or to put it another way, the West is engaged in an unending war for imperial dominance. And that of course was the other side of *1984*: permanent, continual warfare. And it is in large part the unending nature of Western imperial wars that has extinguished all support for them in 90 percent of the British population.

Chris

Ireland

31 August 2013

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Dear comrades,

No one should underestimate just what the British military/intelligence apparatus is capable of. In 1972, when the IRA's campaign of bombing its way to the conference table was in full swing, British intelligence employed two agent provocateurs to carry out a bombing campaign in Dublin. On the night the Dail was discussing introducing the Offences Against the State Act, two bus conductors were killed by the explosions. Needless to say, the Act was passed.

To get Britain on board this criminal imperialist banditry, far bigger provocations could be employed. It is not that Britain's military might is very mighty. But psychologically, and to make this act of war more legally presentable, the more on board the better.

John U

31 August 2013

On "New Snowden revelation details vast US intelligence 'black budget'"

It isn't only the spying that is unconstitutional; it's the very existence of the secret agencies themselves. Article 1, Section 9 of the Constitution makes it clear:

"No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time."

This clause explicitly forbids the very way the CIA and other "intelligence" agencies have been funded and allowed to operate in the dark by the US Congress for decades.

This is from the CIA's own website:

[Q.] "How many people work for the CIA and what is its budget?"

[A.] "Neither the number of employees nor the size of the Agency's budget can, at present, be publicly disclosed. A common misconception is that the Agency has an unlimited budget, which is far from true. While classified, the budget and size of the CIA are known in detail and scrutinized by the Office of Management and Budget and by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Defense Subcommittees of the Appropriations Committees in both houses of Congress. The resources allocated to the CIA are subject to the same rigorous examination and approval process that applies to all other government organizations.

"In 1997, the aggregate figure for all US government

intelligence and intelligence-related activities—of which the CIA is but one part—was made public for the first time. The aggregate intelligence budget was \$26.6 billion in fiscal year 1997 and \$26.7 billion for fiscal year 1998. The intelligence budgets for all other years remain classified.”

In this statement, the CIA claims that its budgets are “known in detail” and “scrutinized” by the members of the OMB, SSCI, and HPSCI, all of them hardened national-security operatives.

The CIA also seems to claim, albeit indirectly, to comply with Article 1, Section 9. But the phrase “shall be published” does not mean “shall be published in secret just for a few fine and fancy folks.” But that’s exactly what they are doing, and have been doing, for Heaven knows how long.

(We citizens have now been downgraded to “folks.” Perhaps it’s time GM came out with a new car commemorating the “folks”—something like a “Folks’ Wagon.”)

Although the CIA didn’t exist at the time Leon Trotsky wrote about “business secrets” in the *Transitional Program* of 1938, it is no less applicable to the business secrets of the government:

“The accounts kept between the individual capitalist and society remain the secret of the capitalist: they are not the concern of society. The motivation offered for the principle of business ‘secrets’ is ostensibly, as in the epoch of liberal capitalism, that of ‘free competition.’ In reality, the trusts keep no secrets from one another. The business secrets of the present epoch are part of a persistent plot of monopoly capitalism against the interests of society. Projects for limiting the autocracy of ‘economic royalists’ will continue to be pathetic farces as long as private owners of the social means of production can hide from producers and consumers the machinations of exploitation, robbery and fraud. The abolition of ‘business secrets’ is the first step toward actual control of industry.

“Workers no less than capitalists have the right to know the ‘secrets’ of the factory, of the trust, of the whole branch of industry, of the national economy as a whole. First and foremost, banks, heavy industry and centralized transport should be placed under an observation glass.”

Only a few minor word changes would broaden this to apply to all of the secret dirty business of

government.

CH

Texas

31 August 2013



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