

Letters from our readers

4 August 2007

The following is a selection of recent letters sent to the World Socialist Web Site.

On “On Cindy Sheehan and impeachment: a reply to a Stalinist critic”

In my youth, I once thought “socialism” was on the verge of being a bad word and steered away from it in my political thinking. Now after many decades, and with only a fairly recent introduction to the online WSWS, I am unsure whether I have become what is sometimes termed as “left-orientated.” I have read a number of articles from the WSWS and am becoming more and more impressed by their insight and balance—this article is another one that (despite its length) I have been drawn to read to its end. It is well thought-out, balanced and crystal-clear. I commend your article and hope it (and others like it) will catch the attention of others who, like me, once looked the other way.

BK

31 July 2007

On “Dozens missing, four confirmed dead in Minnesota bridge collapse”

After the pipe burst in New York City and the bridge collapsed, the chattering class was promoting public-private partnership schemes to address public infrastructure—billed as the alternative to raising taxes. Due to the monopolization of government by corporate interests, the proposal will only be more of the same: public financing the means to privatize the ends, with no accountability or oversight due to deregulation. Already states are selling off their infrastructure for quick fixes without any thought to long-range planning. Every day is a new assault, and bit by bit, with gathering momentum, the division grows wider between the small minority that controls all arms of the government, the flow of information (all the way to local water companies), and the rest of us. Every day they control more, they own more, they profit more at our expense and they tell us that it is the right of those

who have achieved the American dream. Is there anything to stop this runaway train?

RDV

3 August 2007

On “Bursting of credit bubble underlies stock market turbulence”

So, Barry, your article is telling us all that the whole world economy is being managed by 1st-degree (with honours) graduates from the Enron school of business management. Tell us something we don't already know.

GD

Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, UK

2 August 2007

On “The historical roots of the crisis of Amtrak: American passenger rail system plagued with endemic delays”

I am old enough to remember traveling by train from Cleveland to Toledo, Ohio on trains that had dining cars with white tablecloths, real china and cutlery, and waiters! Traveling on trains was a pleasure in those days.

During the 1980s I once took the train along the Northeast Corridor from New York to Washington, DC. The seats were pretty comfortable, but to get something to eat, you had to go to the end of the train to a kind of stand-up, fast food microwave bar for expensive and nearly inedible food. I also regularly traveled from New York's Grand Central Station to the town of Plattsburgh in upstate New York. This train was also deficient in the food department, so I brought my own food with me; it was much better than the swill provided on the train.

Recently I traveled by train from London to York in England and also from Newcastle-Upon-Tyne to Edinburgh, Scotland. These trains were clean and comfortable and had snack carts that came down the aisle. The selection of food wasn't very great, but at least you could stay in your seat to get tea or coffee and

pastry or a sandwich. My British friends complain about their trains, but I tell them that they're lucky not to have the dreadful trains we have in the US.

Since I don't drive, train travel would be my choice on many occasions if it were available and reliable. Traveling from San Francisco to Los Angeles, for instance, would be lovely on a train, but the service is far more expensive than airline tickets for the same trip. And when you fly, you find yourself at an airport with no easy way to get into town. At least, when you arrive by train, the station is usually in the center of town where cheap taxi rides will usually get you to your hotel.

The neglect of American rail systems is a scandal and a pity. Many people nowadays have no idea of what a pleasant way it was to travel in years gone by. The auto and airline industries destroyed the rail system and now cannot even maintain their own systems. This is a crisis for us all.

CZ

San Francisco, California, USA

1 August 2007

On "Adding fuel to the Mideast fire: US unveils huge arms package"

Whilst noting your political analysis of the on-going situation in the Middle East, is the key motive actually the profiteering that is being made and will be made by the US arms industry? Does the arms industry rely on a continuous succession of wars to use up stock and gain vast new orders? Dividing people against each other and arming them seems to be the pattern of politics so useful to the arms industry. But it's a small world with a vast working class population, which increasingly knows what is going on, hopefully not too late to save our planet, which could be turned into a paradise.

DT

1 August 2007

On "Rupert Murdoch takes over Wall Street Journal"

José María Aznar, the former Spanish prime minister and president of the right-wing Popular Party, who publicly supported Bush's and Blair's Iraq invasion (losing thereafter the general elections here) has become a well-paid business agent of Rupert Murdoch's interests in Latin America and Europe. He has recently publicly acted as an agent of the Robert Co. group in Argentina and has worked for other capitalistic concerns directly or indirectly connected

with Murdoch. The use of a large number of media by the Murdoch clan all over the world is obvious.

It is imperative to uncover the names of Murdoch's many political agents acting in his name from different rightist parties at this moment (not to forget Poland). The problem is that left newspapers are scarce and little read. It is probably unknown in the USA that George Bush's younger brother (the former governor of Florida) was in Spain immediately after the invasion of Iraq was decided and he promised "abundant profits" for Spain in return for the "help" given to America. Of course the only profit has gone directly to the hands of José María Aznar, an intimate friend of Berlusconi, the Italian Murdoch. And of course when your and our fascists say "America" or "Spain," they refer to their own interests because they are "the real nation." Always.

AH

Los Angeles, Segovia, Spain

2 August 2007

On "Amusing, but no triumph—Almodóvar's Volver"

Great review of Almodovar's *Volver*. I watched it with my mother, sister and a friend (who had recommended Almodovar to us) and felt a little unsatisfied after watching it. I noticed the shots of wind turbines and wondered about their significance. You give the most convincing explanation I've come across, but to be honest I didn't notice the other references you mentioned (car, bicycle wheels). I think that the film cheatingly seems to be a lot deeper or poignant than it really is by the time you get to the end. I wasn't sure what to think of the film when it ended as I was expecting something more and couldn't work out what Almodovar was trying to communicate through it. Your review helped me make up my mind about it.

AR

Oxford, Oxfordshire, UK

2 August 2007

To contact the WSW and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

<http://www.wsws.org>